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# THE TIMES

No. 65,055 FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9 1994

MPs plan grace-and-favour inquiry

## Royal threat to sue over 'media lies'

By Alan Hamilton and Michael Dynes

BUCKINGHAM Palace is taking legal advice over what it regards as grossly inaccurate, and misleading media reports of the way it uses public money to run the royal palaces.

No individual newspaper or broadcaster organisation has been named, but the Palace has clearly been deeply stung by suggestions of misappropriation, hiding and "lies" in yesterday's coverage of a report by the Commons Public Accounts Committee on the English occupied palaces.

At the same time it was learnt yesterday that the Public Accounts Committee plans a series of hearings in the autumn into one of the principal areas of contention in royal spending — grace-and-favour homes. The disclosure follows the decision by Sir John Bourn, the Comptroller and Auditor General, to launch his own inquiry, focusing on the cost of the occupied royal palaces.

Having seen press coverage of the committee's report, the Palace is considering seeking legal redress, but there are suggestions that they might be satisfied with retractions and apologies. The Queen last took legal action against a newspaper when she successfully sued *The Sun* for disclosing in advance the text of her Christmas broadcast.

A senior Royal Household official, who declined to be named, said yesterday: "There seems to be no regard for the truth at all. We've got this great institution, the most



Williams turned up the heat on the royal family

archy, why are people telling lies about it?" Reports that the Queen had refused to disclose how she spent £20 million a year from the Department of National Heritage were simply not true, he said.

The Commons committee called for greater "public visibility" of the Royal Household's accounts, but made no suggestion of misappropriation. It acknowledged that the Palace already gave sufficient information to provide effective accountability to the heritage department and to Parliament, and that the Royal Household had no objection to its accounts being fully available.

But the committee wanted full access to the Palace's books and records and said they should be fully available to the National Audit Office, the watchdog of all government spending. The Palace has said consistently that it has nothing to hide, but that the decision on publishing full accounts rests with the heritage department.

Much of the heat has been generated by Alan Williams, Labour MP for Swansea West and a member of the Commons committee. He has regularly levelled criticism at a "pampered court" — a reference to the seven members of the royal family who live free of charge in grace-and-favour residences.

An unrepentant Mr Williams said yesterday of the Palace's threatened resort to legal action: "They were the same when I started pointing out the facts about the royal yacht. The same sort of smokescreen came up then."

The Royal Household is especially incensed at media

suggestions that much of the money raised by the opening of Buckingham Palace to visitors has not found its way into the Windsor Castle fire restoration fund for which it was intended.

In its first year of opening, the Palace generated £4.8 million from ticket and souvenir sales, of which £2.2 million went into the fund.

"They are suggesting that this money has been misappropriated — that we have stolen £2.6 million, that it is not accounted for," the Royal Household spokesman said. "The difference is between turnover and net profit, and is accounted for in an audited and published document."

The Palace spent £1.3 million stocking the souvenir shop, £600,000 on the wages of 200 temporary wardens and ticket staff and £600,000 on their uniforms, security machines, ramps for the disabled, protective carpeting and the building of a ticket office.

Grace-and-favour residences were also criticised by some newspapers yesterday.

As disclosed in *The Times*, most of the 272 residences are occupied by members of the Royal Household staff, who pay 16.7 per cent of their net salary in rent, and who also pay their own gas, electricity and telephone bills.

Only 40 are occupied free of charge — by seven royal family members, 13 retired senior Army officers at Windsor Castle and 20 retired household staff. No new apartments have been granted free since 1991.

*Paris Match*, the French magazine which yesterday published a blurred full-frontal nude photograph of the Prince of Wales in Paris, has decided not to distribute its latest edition in Britain. The picture was first published on Wednesday in the German tabloid *Bild*.

Yesterday Allan Percival, the Prince's press secretary, said that Buckingham Palace was still considering whether to take legal action against the publishers and photographer, who had used a long lens.

Hostile press, page 3  
John Grigg and Diary, page 18  
Leading article, and Letters, page 19



The Stars and Stripes being lowered as US forces bid farewell to Berlin

## Berlin: end of a long farewell

By Our Foreign Staff

THE Cold War era came to a final close in Germany yesterday with the withdrawal of the last British soldier from West Berlin. John Major flew to the city to pay tribute to the troops, who had guarded the city for nearly 50 years, and to take part in a marathon ten-hour programme of farewell celebrations.

Under the terms of German unification, the Western Allies that protected the city since the end of the Second World War

— Britain, France and the United States — were required to withdraw their troops by the end of this year. However, with Russia pulling out its forces on schedule — they left for home last month — the way was paved for the rest of the foreign armies to leave the city before that deadline.

Sir Nigel Broomfield, Britain's Ambassador in Bonn, and Eberhard Diepgen, the Mayor of Berlin, flanked Mr Major as he inspected the last remaining British troops at their headquarters at Hitler's

Olympic stadium; the premises have now been handed back to the German government. Brigadier David de Gonville Bromhead was the last commander of British troops in Berlin.

Last night, Berliners were treated to a rare military tattoo, called a *Zugfestschritt*, by the German army. The musical, torch-lit ceremony is performed only on special occasions.

Armistice anniversary, page 9  
Cold War city salute, page 12

## Queen's advice sought as Derby switches to Saturday

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

THE Derby is to be run on a Saturday next year as part of an attempt to revive the fortunes of the world's most famous Flat horse race.

The switch from the traditional first Wednesday in June coincides with a reduction in the Derby meeting from four days to three, with all the races carrying the name of a new sponsor. A decline in the popularity of the Derby in recent years has increased pressure to switch the classic to the weekend.

Sunday was considered by Epsom's new owners, United Racecourses, after the Commons voted in favour of Sunday racing this year. When the Queen, a keen racer and regular Derby Day spectator, was consulted, however, she said that although the timing was a matter for the course owners, neither she nor Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother would be able to attend on a Sunday.

to include an attempt to break the five-furlong world speed record.

The switch of the Derby date is likely to prompt a big increase in betting turnover and could threaten the position of the Aintree Grand National as the most popular race with punters.

Mike Dillon, of Ladbrokes, Britain's biggest bookmakers, said yesterday: "We have long been advocates of a Saturday Derby. Currently it is the second highest turnover race, attracting £30 million of bets. On a Saturday more people



Approaching the finish in this year's Derby

Her views, with those of the new sponsor, prompted the change to a Saturday, and Christopher Sporborg, chairman of the course owners, has written to tell the Queen of the change.

Edward Gillespie, the firm's managing director, said yesterday: "We want to re-establish the Derby as the benchmark for excellence and make it an absolutely unmissable race. The new sponsor's profile sits very comfortably with the way we want to take the Derby, and they share our own ambitions for the race."

The name of new sponsor is due to be announced next month, with the changes to the Derby meeting. Details have to be completed, but the Oaks, the classic for fillies over the Derby distance, is likely to be run on Friday with the Coronation Cup, and Sunday's racing will be aimed at a family audience. It is expected

will have freedom to bet. Although a Saturday Derby and racing on Sunday at Epsom will swell the crowds, the changes could have a negative effect on the profitable corporate hospitality at the racetrack. Weekdays are traditionally more appealing for companies and their clients.

The first Wednesday in June has long been the chosen day for running the Derby, but it was staged on Saturday between 1947 and 1950 and again in 1953, the year Pinza, ridden by Sir Gordon Richards, beat Aureole, owned by the Queen.

Racing, page 41

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USA 12.00

## Strike-beating train derailed

By Philip Bassett and Bill Frost

RAIL unions last night called for an urgent investigation into a "near miss" at an unmanned level crossing in which two cars went over the line seconds before a passenger train passed.

It was the first of two incidents causing alarm during yesterday's 24-hour signalworkers' strike, on a day in which British Rail claimed 7,500 trains, about half the normal number, ran.

The derailment of an evening commuter train at Bickley, southeast London, from which all passengers escaped unhurt, was also under investigation last night although Railtrack said "there is no indication at this stage that the derailment was the result of a signalling matter".

In the earlier incident automatic barriers were raised because of maintenance work at Sawley, near Long Eaton, Derbyshire, according to the Aslef union. It complained that workers should have been

deployed with hand-held signals to control cars and trains, but this was not done.

The nearest signal box was being worked by a manager because of the strike by signalling staff. Aslef said the 11.18am Crewe to Nottingham train approached the crossing at 12.44pm. The driver noticed two cars going over the line and when he passed through the crossing, he saw the barriers were raised. The union spokesman said: "By a lucky coincidence of time there was no accident."

Jimmy Knapp, the RMT general secretary, said: "This is the sort of incident we have been warning about." However, a Railtrack Midlands spokesman denied any signalling error.

Earlier in the day Rob Lowther, 90, was killed after being run down by a train at a level crossing in Whitstable, Kent. Railtrack said his death was tragic but unrelated to the strike.

## CBI warns on tax cuts

Howard Davies, director-general of the CBI, warned the Government last night against interest rate rises and tax cuts, and insisted in a speech to business leaders in Glasgow that the Government and the Bank of England had to deliver on their economic promises if an increase in inflation were to be avoided. Page 23

## Lonely hearts killer jailed

Brian Vale, 45, a psychopath who battered to death a woman doctor when she ended their six-month affair which grew out of her lonely hearts advertisement, was jailed for life yesterday at the Old Bailey. Page 6

## Jackson drops out

Britain's hopes of winning the men's athletics World Cup, which opens at Crystal Palace tonight, suffered a blow when Colin Jackson withdrew with stomach problems. Page 44

## Loyalists demand London pledge

By Nicholas Watt, Ireland Correspondent

HOPES of an early Loyalist ceasefire were dashed yesterday when paramilitary groups tabled a list of demands, including an assurance of Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the United Kingdom.

In its first response to the IRA ceasefire declared last week, the Combined Loyalist Military Command, the umbrella group for the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Freedom Fighters, said that it would contribute to peace only once its six demands had been addressed. The statement came as soldiers throughout the province wore berets on the first day of the army's more relaxed regime on the eighth day of the IRA truce.

Last night, Albert Reynolds, the Irish Prime Minister, welcomed the Loyalists' statement. He hoped to be able to allay the fears of the groups, and repeated that there had been no secret deals with the IRA. The Loyalist command

said it had made a serious analysis of the IRA ceasefire. It had to be convinced that no secret deals had been concocted between the British Government and the IRA.

It also wanted to be sure that the IRA ceasefire was permanent and to ascertain whether the Irish National Liberation Army, the republican splinter group, would also be announcing a ceasefire.

The IRA ceasefire has provoked one of the most intense debates among Loyalist paramilitary groups during the history of the Troubles. The UVF and the UFF are acutely aware of how easy it would be to hand republicans a propaganda victory if they fail to follow the IRA and declare truce.

Many Loyalists are reluctant to announce a ceasefire, however, because they have scores to settle with members of the IRA.

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Soldiers' presence provokes first serious political clash since ceasefire

# Rifkind rules out early reduction in troop numbers

By Philip Webster and Richard Ford in Belfast

MALCOLM Rifkind yesterday ruled out an early reduction in troop numbers in Northern Ireland, prompting the first serious clash between the Government and Sinn Féin since the IRA ceasefire.

In his first remarks since the cessation of military operations came into effect, the Defence Secretary said the security presence could not be reduced until the Government was convinced that terrorism had ended.

Mr Rifkind's decision typified the caution that has characterised the Government's attitude to the ceasefire since it was announced last week. Martin McGuinness, a leading Sinn Féin member, accused him of arrogance and said the continual presence of British troops on the streets was provocative.

Speaking on *The World at One* on BBC Radio 4, Mr Rifkind said: "The crucial requirement is to ensure the security of the people of Northern Ireland is fully protected. If peace was coming to Northern Ireland and there was no more violence and terrorism, then over a considerable period of time, some gradual reduction in the military presence of Northern Ireland may be sensible", he said. That judgment would be reached

on security considerations. "We are certainly not rushing into that. I am not envisaging any immediate changes of that kind."

Mr Rifkind said: "Northern Ireland is part of the UK and therefore our military presence in Northern Ireland is not an option, nor a choice. It is one of the first duties of Government to protect its own citizens."

Mr McGuinness said Mr Rifkind's comments were unimaginative and arrogant. "It has to be remembered that

## 'Shoot-to-kill' inquests end

Inquests on six unarmed men shot dead by police in Northern Ireland were scrapped by a coroner yesterday. John Lecky said that he could not proceed because he had been refused access to reports of the "shoot-to-kill" inquiries into the RUC actions. The High Court in Belfast had ruled disclosure could imperil national security.

The men, five of them terrorists, were shot by special police units in Co Armagh in 1982.

such an element of any peace process is demilitarisation and the IRA statement of last week puts it all in an entirely new situation. The continual presence of British soldiers on the streets is particularly provocative at this time."

He added: "I think we did expect there would be a degree of reciprocity by the British Government and it is quite clear they have not done so, that the troop level is quite high in the Six Counties."

Sinn Féin has already called for British troops to be pulled out of Catholic areas, but some moderate nationalists in the Social Democratic and Labour Party want continued protection against possible Loyalist violence.

However, despite the politicians' caution, Irish officials confidently expect the fragile peace to bring a boom in Northern Ireland tourism. The chief executives of the Irish and Northern Ireland Tourist Boards meet in Belfast today to plan how the ceasefire can be exploited to promote the island as a holiday destination.

An early sign of a peace dividend has been the indication that the Open Golf Championship could be held in the province for the first time since 1951.



A soldier on the Falls Road, Belfast, yesterday in his traditional Glengarry cap.

## Troops shed helmets but villagers keep up their guard

By Nicholas Watt

SOLDIERS swapped their helmets for berets as they patrolled the streets of Crossmaglen in South Armagh yesterday but the new approach did not impress many locals.

On the first day of the Army's more relaxed regime and ignoring the IRA slogans scrawled on lampposts, young soldiers ambled through the village where Daniel Blinco, a Guardsman, was shot dead by a terrorist sniper last December.

The troops still wore their combat gear and flak jackets but replaced helmets with dark blue berets bearing the insignia of their regiment. The

Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters. The camouflage make-up they wear on their faces during yomps through the countryside had been removed.

A soldier guarding the fortified security base next to the village square said he was feeling considerably more relaxed. He joked over his personal radio to a comrade but remained alert as a Chinook helicopter came into land, protected by two Lynx helicopters hovering above. Another soldier who sang quietly to himself as he arrived back with three others after a foot patrol said that he had been able to appreciate the beauty of the South Armagh country-

side for the first time. "People were also talking to me," he added.

The wearing of berets by troops throughout Northern Ireland, even in IRA strongholds such as Crossmaglen and West Belfast, is the first of a series of measures to lower the Army's profile if the ceasefire holds. Before the ceasefire was announced, ministers had drawn up a list of proposals that could include returning soldiers to barracks in Northern Ireland.

Behind the smiles on the soldiers' faces yesterday was an awareness that they could not let their guard drop. The last big IRA ceasefire of 1975 effectively collapsed when four

soldiers died in a bomb attack near Forkhill, Co Armagh.

Local people in Crossmaglen, who say their lives have been severely disrupted for more than 20 years by the constant din of helicopters, were unimpressed by the Army's new regime.

Paddy Short, who runs a bar near the square, said: "All the goodwill signals from the British are going to the Unionists at the moment. The people here simply want to return to the days when there was no Army in Crossmaglen."

He was adamant that the troops would not be welcome in his bar. "They are an army of occupation," he

said. "A leopard does not change its spots."

Eddie Hughes, the chairman of an athletics club whose playing field is often requisitioned by the Army as a helicopter landing pad, said: "I'm not interested whether there are berets or no berets. I just want to see them go."

Locals, many of whose lives were endangered when the IRA fired a mortar at a helicopter in March, hope that the ceasefire will last. However, the Provisionals have stamped their mark in Crossmaglen. Visitors are greeted by huge signs in the hue of the Irish tricolour. Mock road signs carry grim messages such as "Sniper at work."

## Live-fire corporal unlawfully killed

An inquest jury returned a verdict of unlawful killing yesterday on a soldier who was shot and killed during a live-fire exercise on Salisbury Plain. David Masters, the Wiltshire coroner, called for major changes in Army safety regulations after a four-day inquest on Corporal Neil Hughes, 26, from the Duke of Wellington's Regiment at Bulford, near Salisbury.

Cpl Hughes was shot as he knelt in a trench during an exercise on September 21 last year, with bullets whistling the wrong way across the "battlefield". Major Michael Noonan, an Army safety expert, later found that aspects of the planning and execution of the exercise were flawed or incomplete, laying troops open to risk.

## Pupil drug inquiry ends

Drugs squad officers have ended a three-month investigation at Ampleforth College that led to the arrest and suspension of ten pupils aged between 15 and 18. The operation started after a tip-off while the boys were on a day visit to York in June. Bedrooms and property at the school, including diaries kept by the pupils, were subsequently examined. The ten boys at the £10,000-a-year Roman Catholic school in North Yorkshire have been cautioned by police and no further action is to be taken.

## Train driver drunk

A drunken train driver caused damage amounting to £500,000 when he crashed a train into a booking office at Tottenham Corner, Surrey, forcing two staff to leap for their lives, the Old Bailey was told yesterday. Stephen Peckham, 41, of South Norwood, south London, admitted two charges of causing damage to the train and booking hall, endangering the safety of passengers and working on the transport system after consuming alcohol. He will be sentenced next week. Peckham has been dismissed by BR.

## Energy policy criticised

Expenditure by the Government on the search for wind and wave power was seriously called into question by the Commons Public Accounts Committee yesterday. The committee doubted whether the modest increases in new electricity from such renewable energy sources justified the sums spent. The former energy department, now part of the Trade and Industry Department, invested some £340 million on "green" energy research, but less than half the projects approved by ministers are producing electricity.

## Commonwealth roles

A plan under which the British sovereign would no longer be the permanent head of the Commonwealth is being put to member governments by the Labour politician Tony Benn. He is proposing that the British King or Queen should take turns with other Commonwealth leaders to take the title "head of the Commonwealth". He suggests that the change could take place at the end of the Queen's reign. The Prince of Wales, when he becomes King, would take his place on a rota. *Continued, page 19*

## Ex-soldier admits killing

A former Army tank driver has admitted killing a 62-year-old hillwalker whose disappearance led to a huge police hunt. Donald McMillan told the High Court in Inverness that he suffocated Fiona Torbet with a pillow. McMillan, 33, who denies murder, said he did not intend to kill Mrs Torbet and was trying to calm her down after an argument. He buried her in the garden of the guest house which his parents run near Kyle in the Highlands and where Mrs Torbet was a frequent guest. The trial continues.

## RAF refit condemned

The £387,000 bill for refurbishing an RAF chief's official residence has been severely criticised in an independent report commissioned by the Ministry of Defence. Sheila Masters, of the accountants KPMG Marwick, is understood to have criticised the system under which refurbishing costs are monitored. Her inquiry focused solely on the official five-bedroomed home of Air Chief Marshal Sir Sandy Wilson, head of the RAF's personnel and training command. Details will be revealed in the autumn.

## Laughter for Roy Castle

The family of Roy Castle, right, celebrated his 55th birthday yesterday with a jazz band, laughter and balloons at a service of thanksgiving after his funeral at Amersham Crematorium, Buckinghamshire. At the service, attended by over 1,000 people, three of his children played music while a fourth gave a reading. Guests wore colourful clothes at the family's request. *Picture, page 22*

## Rex Alston dies at 93

Rex Alston, the journalist and sports commentator, has died at the age of 93. Mr Alston, who shared cricket commentary boxes with the late John Arlott and Brian Johnston, joined the BBC in 1942 as an announcer. He covered five Olympic Games, starting with the London Olympics of 1948. In 1985, he had the disconcerting experience of reading his own obituary in *The Times*. An apology was printed the following day, after he rang to say that he was still alive. *Obituaries, page 21.*

## Britain may cut nuclear patrols

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

THE Government is expected to abandon its policy of maintaining a round-the-clock patrol by at least one nuclear ballistic missile submarine.

Under options being studied by the Ministry of Defence, the patrol cycle of the missile submarines could be changed, allowing for a gap in Britain's nuclear deterrent cover.

Although there are no immediate plans to change the patrol cycle, the officials are studying whether the Polaris submarines, and the more powerful Trident boats which will replace them by the end of the decade, can be put on a reduced state of readiness, with intermittent patrols.

After the Cold War ended and the Soviet bloc collapsed, Britain and America declared that nuclear missiles would no longer be directed at the former Soviet Union. But despite technical faults with some of the Polaris submarines and a reduction in the force from four to three boats after one was taken out of service, the Royal Navy has maintained a round-the-clock patrol.

Navy officials said that if the Government dropped the

commitment to permanent patrols, the number of trained submariners could be reduced. At present, two crews are trained for each patrol cycle, with the second ready to go as soon as the submarine returns to base at Faslane on the Clyde.

Consultations are under way with France and America, which are also reviewing nuclear weapons strategy.

The current discussions at the MoD do not involve policy changes on the number of missiles and warheads to be carried by the Trident deterrent. In November Malcolm Rifkind, the Defence Secretary, stated that the nuclear firepower of the four Trident submarines would be no greater than that of the Polaris missiles. This amounted to a reduction in Trident's potential.

Navy sources emphasised that even if the patrol cycle was changed to allow for intermittent deployments of the nuclear submarines, the Government would retain the capability to mount permanent patrols. This means there is no likelihood of reducing the number of boats in service.

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Battered and bleeding victim crawled around house for four days after savage attack

## Spurned woman denies plotting to murder lover

By A Staff Reporter

A 'WEALTHY' woman who was spurned by her former business partner and lover hatched a plot with a "hitman" to murder him, a jury was told yesterday.

Elizabeth Litchfield, 56, set out to destroy Anthony Peters' career then planned to have him killed after taking out a £200,000 insurance policy on his life, Timothy Barnes, QC, for the prosecution, told North Crown Court.

However, the plan backfired when Mr. Peters, 47, survived a savage attack in his home by the alleged hitman, Brian Higgins.

Mr Peters' skull fractured in three places and, unable to summon help, he crawled around his home in pools of blood for four days, the court was told.

Mrs Litchfield, 56, of Easton, and Mr Higgins, 45, of March, Cambridgeshire, both deny conspiring to murder Mr Peters. Mr Higgins also denies attempting to murder him and causing him grievous

bodily harm with intent on July 16, 1992.

The court heard that the pair had left Mr Peters' home at Thurston, Norfolk, on the night he was attacked believing he was dead. Four days later they had still not heard that his body had been found.

Mr Barnes said they decided to return to Mr Peters' home. They found him lying on the kitchen floor. There was blood all over him, but he was not dead. He was still, just, clinging to life. One can imagine their feelings when they found him in that state. They did no further violence. He was pretty close to death in any event.

The emergency services were called, said Mr Barnes, and Mr Peters was taken first to a local hospital then to a special head injuries unit at Addenbrookes Hospital. He survived due to the skill of doctors who carried out emergency brain surgery. "He has recovered to a degree from that terrifying attack upon

him. He suffered brain damage and is unlikely ever to work again or regain his full mental faculties.

"Fortunately for him, and fortunately for the defendants, he has no recollection of the attack or who was responsible for striking those blows to his head," Mr Barnes said.

Mr Higgins and Mrs Litchfield had gone to Mr Peters' home for a business meeting. Mr Peters had sat in his armchair eating peanuts from a dispenser and Mrs Litchfield sipped ginger wine as they talked before the attack, the court was told.

"The prosecution case is that Mr Peters was struck a number of savage blows to his head while he was sitting in his chair in his living room. When they left him battered and close to death on the floor of his living room, they wanted him to be dead and believed him to be dead or on the point of death."

After the attack Mr Peters spent the next four days "dragging and hauling" himself around his house, unable to reach his telephone in the hall. He did not turn up for work and missed a meeting with his daughter. His telephone rang on many occasions, but he could not reach it.

Mr Barnes said Mrs Litchfield and Mr Peters had been lovers for some time when Mr Peters ended the affair. Mr Barnes said Mr Peters had a "roving eye" and started going out with other women.

The couple had set up a successful firm, Direct Telecom Services, in 1989. Mrs Litchfield was the managing director. Mr Peters the technical director. Mr Higgins later joined the company as a salesman and became very close to Mrs Litchfield, although there was no sexual relationship with him, Mr Barnes said.

Mr Peters and Mrs Litchfield then set up Inter European Business Commu-



Elizabeth Litchfield, the successful businesswoman who is alleged to have taken out a £200,000 insurance policy on Anthony Peters' life and plotted his murder with a "hitman" after Mr Peters ended their affair

nications, where Mr Peters was the managing director and Mrs Litchfield was a director. Mr Barnes said that after Mr Peters ended their affair, Mrs Litchfield's feelings for him turned to hate and she set out to destroy his career.

"The sexual relationship was dead because Mr Peters had broken it off. Mrs Litchfield's feelings for Mr Peters had changed from feelings of affection to feelings of hatred towards him... feel-

ings you may conclude that provide the motive for what happened."

He described how their second business went into liquidation after a contract with Amoco, the American oil company, was lost.

Mrs Litchfield had told Amoco about illicit payments being paid by Mr Peters to an Amoco employee and Mr Peters was made redundant.

After the break-up Mrs Litchfield had demanded that

Mr Peters return £52,000 she had lent him to buy a house.

Mr Barnes said that on the day Mr Peters' body was found, Mrs Litchfield met his new girlfriend outside the injured man's house. He said Mrs Litchfield told her: "I suppose he has been two-timing me for you." Then she denied her affair with Mr Peters was over and said she had been sleeping with him "quite recently".

Three months before the attack, Mrs Litchfield took out the £200,000 insurance policy on Mr Peters' life, paying £268 a month in premiums.

"Mr Peters knew that his life was being insured and underwent a medical examination and signed a form. The stage was set for the final chapter which was the killing of Mr Peters by Mr Higgins as the man to strike the fatal blows," Mr Barnes told the court.

The trial continues.

## Palace sources seethe in silence

By BILL FROST

BUCKINGHAM Palace sources have refused to name the hostile newspapers and broadcasters whose treatment of the Public Accounts Committee report aroused such dismay.

Even the most cursory examination of tabloid coverage, however, could explain the anger in Royal circles that may lead to legal action against some of the alleged culprits.

Under the banner headline "A Right Royal Rip Off", Today splashed on the story yesterday morning with a sub-heading that read: "£20 million of our tax vanishes EVERY year..."

Charles Rae, the paper's royal correspondent, said in his front page story that "astonished MPs" were demanding an investigation into how a "cool £20 million of taxpayers' money disappears into the black hole of the Queen's housekeeping account every year."

Like other members of the so-called "rapack", he singled out the royal £766,000 phone bill for particular attention. MPs, he said, wanted to know how every penny was spent.

Royal aides were particularly angered by the claim in Today and other hostile tabloids that only £2.2 million of the £4.83 million collected from the public after parts of Buckingham Palace had been opened to visitors would go towards the restoration of Windsor Castle. They alleged that some stories implied funds were stolen.

The Daily Express also concentrated on the "extraordinary level of perks enjoyed by royal staff, including dozens of rent-free homes. One of the paper's leaders yesterday, headlined "Out of Favour", said: "What other country could find grace-and-favour homes within its royal palaces for the likes of the Queen's deputy head bookbinder?"

The Daily Mirror spread the story over two pages with the headline "£20 million Disgrace and Favour". Its leader said: "It is a scandal and it's time the taxpayer stopped paying for it."

Legal advice, page 1  
Leading article, page 19

## Student's killer may serve life

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE American who stalked and killed a British student after meeting her during an exchange visit was told by a judge yesterday that he may be jailed for life.

Curtis Howard, 27, who admitted manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility at a hearing in July, showed no reaction to the judge's remarks as he sat in a dock at the Old Bailey.

Howard had become obsessed with Catherine Ayling, 22, who visited the college where he was studying in Massachusetts in 1989. After she rejected his advances for two years, he stabbed her to death. Her body was left in a car boot at Gatwick airport.

Mr Justice Hadden adjourned sentence until September 28 because medical reports he had twice requested to assess whether Howard is suitable for treatment were still unavailable.

One report that was available, from a doctor at Broadmoor hospital, concluded: "Howard does not represent a risk of serious harm to others and accordingly I do not recommend his admission to maximum security."

## Police raid housing estate blighted by lawlessness

By PAUL WILKINSON

MORE than a hundred police, including mounted officers, sealed off four streets and raided 19 houses early yesterday in a Yorkshire village bedevilled by lawlessness.

Afterwards some of the 30 vehicles that ferried officers to the estate were used to take away suspected stolen property, including electrical goods and vehicle parts, drugs and counterfeit currency.

South Yorkshire Police said the operation in the former pit village of Grimethorpe was a reaction to rising trouble on the Seaside estate. Last weekend Mandy Penny, a 25-year-old mother who had helped police after her home was burgled, had property dragged from her home and burnt in the street. Firecrews and police were stoned.

Superintendent Gillian Bradford, the area's divisional commander, said that the last straw was on Tuesday when an intruder threatened a woman in her home with a baseball bat.

In yesterday's operation, intended to restore public confidence, her officers detained people suspected of involvement in a series of crimes from

burglary to threats of personal violence. Last night 15 men and three women in their teens and early 20s were being questioned by officers.

Residents blamed outsiders who have moved into the deprived community since the pit closed. Grimethorpe became a symbol of the decimation of the coal industry nearly two years ago when sweeping pit closures were announced. The village, a few miles outside Barnsley, became a near-



Penny's belongings were burnt in the street

ghost town and an unemployment black-spot.

The Seaside estate was originally a council development of four streets named after South Coast resorts. "It would be safer in Belfast than around here," Edward Devoy, 43, of Margate Street, said. He lost £3,000 in a recent burglary. "I had hardly left the street to go away for a few days when neighbours broke in and stole my video, hi-fi, ghetto blaster, microwave and fryer. They even emptied my freezer and took my wet-shave razor."

"Most of the criminals are not from Grimethorpe. They have been dumped on us and started a reign of terror. They think they are above and beyond the law."

Alex Voddie, a councillor, said: "People have been afraid to walk along the village streets at night. People think too many undesirables have been rehoused on the estate."

After the raids, Supt Bradford sent a letter to residents calling on them to inform on criminals in their midst. "If we work together, we can restore Grimethorpe to the place that some of you will remember," she wrote.

## Gorillas, sex and the naked ape

By MICHAEL HORNSBY  
COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

A pair of sex-shy gorillas in the Marquess of Bath's safari park at Longleat in Wiltshire are to be shown the prime equivalent of blue movies in the hope of reviving their libidos.

The flamboyant 62-year-old peer's Kama Sutra Room, perhaps a surprising addition to the Renaissance interior of Longleat House, already features murals intended to give human visitors hints on love-making technique.

Keepers at the safari park think similar visual stimulation might persuade their two West African lowland gorillas, Nico and Samba, to mate and have offspring. All other strategies have failed.

Nico, the male, and Samba, the female, are to be shown video film of other gorillas copulating and rearing their young. Columbus Zoo in Ohio

claims to have had success with such methods and is sending over some suitable film.

Ian Turner, the deputy warden at Longleat, said: "We have tried everything, including sending them temporarily to other zoos and bringing in different partners. Although they are both 33 years old, neither has yet succeeded in mating, either with each other or with any other gorilla."

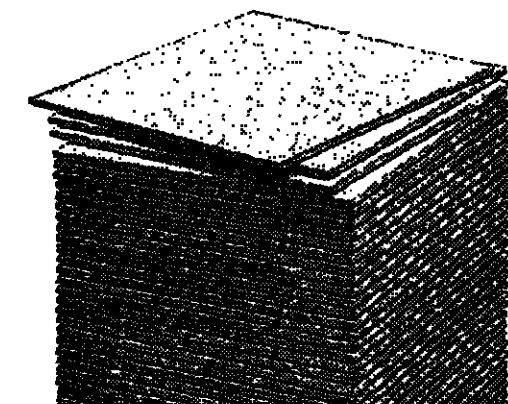
Nothing was physically wrong, he said. "Nico has a good sperm count and Samba regularly comes into season. They are affectionate and often go through the motions of mating, though with gorillas it is difficult to tell whether anything is actually happening as their equipment is quite small."

The two creatures, who live in lonely state on an island in the middle of an ornamental lake, are already seasoned television viewers. Nico is particularly

fond of Tom and Jerry cartoons and they both like wildlife films. A television screen is installed next to their den and they spend several hours in front of it every night. A local television company donated a satellite dish.

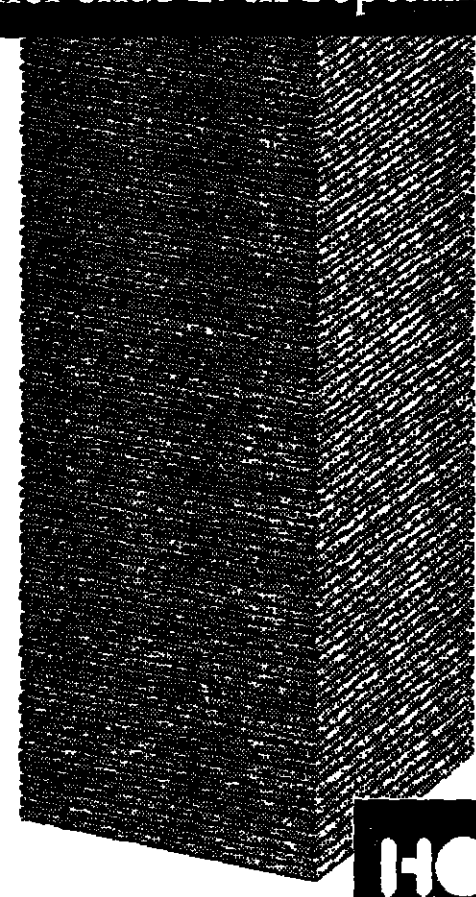
Mr Turner explained: "When we imported Nico and Samba from a Swiss zoo eight years ago they had to go into six months' quarantine. We got them a TV to relieve the boredom and they liked it so much we decided to make it a permanent feature of their quarters. The TV is timed to come on when they enter their hut at night and switches off at 11pm."

Mr Turner is sceptical that the video sex will prove the turn-on that the Americans claim but says anything is worth a try. "The truth is that Samba is a bit of a tomboy and Nico is not quite as aggressive as he should be," he said. "In the end it may be that they are just too friendly. There just doesn't seem to be enough naked lust around."



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# Rogers wins South Bank project with 'crystal palace' plan

BY MARCUS BINNEY

SIR Richard Rogers' dream of transforming the South Bank arts complex into a vibrant London counterpart of his Pompidou Centre in Paris moved a step forward yesterday with the announcement that he has won the competition to replace the whole site.

His design for a "crystal palace" between the Royal Hall and the National Theatre was selected from a shortlist of three finalists. Allies and Morrison were placed second and Michael Hopkins and Partners third.

The Rogers design has a vast curtain glass front and a serpentine roof the shape of a human eye and would enclose the Hayward Gallery and Queen Elizabeth Hall.

The South Bank scheme joins the growing line of London projects vying for National Lottery funds.

The prospect of a new Rogers building not only adds glamour to the project but puts the South Bank temporarily ahead of the Tate Gallery, which still has to choose an architect for converting the Bankside power station into a new gallery of modern art.

The Rogers proposal would rid the South Bank of its hated concrete walkways. A huge covered space would provide new entrances and foyers.

Sir Brian Corby, chairman of the judges said: "The Rogers partnership showed the greatest grasp of the space, how to animate it and how to create new links with surrounding areas, both north and south of the river."

If an application for lottery funds is to succeed, the Rogers scheme will need planning permission from Lambeth Council, which is demanding extensive local consultation. A previous Rogers scheme for a Milan-style gallery of shops and offices running from Waterloo Station to Blackfriars Bridge was killed by fierce local opposition.

The choice heightens Sir Richard's rivalry with Sir Norman Foster, who is leading bids to the National Lottery from the British Museum. Sir Richard must also win the support of a vocal group which sees the Hayward Gallery as one of the great monuments of the 1960s and wishes it to be preserved intact along with the recently listed National Theatre.

The choice of Sir Richard shows the board believes that the best route to lottery funds is a dazzling new landmark on the river which could act as a focus for the capital's millennium celebrations. The huge curtain glass front, the size of the mouth of a railway terminus, is clearly intended to be London's brightest and most inviting night-time sight.

Sir Richard also proposes a new pedestrian bridge across the river linking with Waterloo Station, as well as moving pavements across Hungerford Railway Bridge. Two floating islands beneath each bridge would provide cafes and mooring space for boats.

The sculptor Sir Eduardo Paolozzi is considering donating a sizeable collection of his work to the city of Edinburgh as a permanent exhibition.

Sir Eduardo has recently held talks with Lothian Regional Council about the possibility of forming a Paolozzi collection in the Dean Centre adjacent to the Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh.

Eric Milligan, convenor of the council, said yesterday: "I heard in the last month or two that there was the possibility he could be persuaded to donate work to Edinburgh, and he has confirmed he is interested in giving his work to the city of his birth."



Sir Richard: design has vast glass front

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Fans send prices soaring as jazz legend's memorabilia is auctioned

## Charlie Parker's sax sets £93,500 saleroom record



The jazz saxophonist Peter King, left, at Christie's yesterday playing the Grafton acrylic alto saxophone that once belonged to Charlie Parker. Right, a pioneer of be-bop. It was sold by his widow who now lives in Paris

CHARLIE Parker, one of the founding fathers of modern jazz, became a saleroom celebrity yesterday when his saxophone made £206,657, double their estimate, at Christie's South Kensington (John Shaw writes).

Jazz fans from around the world left pre-sale estimates far behind in the scramble for the driving licence, union card and music manuscripts of the man who created the distinctive rapid-fire be-bop style. The famous cream plastic alto saxophone he

played at a celebrated concert at Massey Hall, Toronto, in May 1953 made a record £93,500.

The previous best for a saxophone was an instrument autographed by President Clinton which made £22,000. Peter King, the jazz altoist, played the 32-bar melody of *Confirmation*, one of Parker's greatest tunes, to saleroom applause before the instrument went under the hammer.

Parker was born in humble circumstances in Kansas

City and the instrument was bought by Emanuel Cleaver, the mayor, for the city's new jazz museum due to open next year.

Mr Cleaver, bidding by telephone, also bought the contract for the concert for £2,640 (£700-900) and an award by the jazz magazine *Downbeat* (1950) for £3,060.

The concert was famous for the reunion between Parker and his co-innovator Dizzy Gillespie, the trumpeter, two of the main figures who pioneered be-bop in the small group scene on 52nd Street, New York, in the early 1940s.

Parker, known universally as Bird, died aged 34 in 1955. The relics of his turbulent life in music were sold by Chan Parker, the musician's widow, who lives in Paris. They were estimated at £60,000 to £100,000.

She said afterwards: "I'm amazed and delighted with the results. It's remarkable to think that some of the items went for more than Bird ever made. It's a sad parting, but I still have the memories."



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## THE TIMES COUNTDOWN

£1,000

To be won each day

TODAY is Day Four of the third week of our Countdown wordgame which offers you the chance to win up to £1,000 every weekday.

There are two games to play each day — the TV game, played in conjunction with Channel 4's Countdown, and The Times game — each offering a prize of £500. If a game has no winner the unclaimed prize is added to the next day's prize. To play both games you will need your weekly Countdown game card, which you will find in The Times every Tuesday. This week's game card is blue.

THE TV GAME

To play, tune in to Countdown on Channel 4 at 4pm today and you have 45 chances of winning or sharing the £500 prize. In each of the six rounds where letters are drawn on TV a contestant will select nine letters. As the letters appear on screen check them against the eight letters printed for the same TV round at the top of your game card (ie, by excluding the rounds where numbers are drawn, Round 5 on TV will equate to word Round 4 on your card). If you can match all eight letters, in any one round, in any order, you have won that round and can claim a share of today's £500. NB If you have the same letter repeated in any one row on your card, it can only be crossed off if that letter appears the same number of times on that TV round.

To claim the TV prize, phone our hotline on 091-510 0665 between 5pm and 8pm today. You must have your game card with you. If there is more than one valid claim, the prize money will be divided equally among the winners. If there are no valid claims, today's prize will be added to Monday's money.

THE TIMES GAME

On your Countdown game card there are five daily games. Each game consists of five rounds with nine spaces which include a combination of either five or six consonants which will vary from card to card. Printed above

### THE TIMES

Today's Vowels

Round 1 E E I E

Round 2 E E I

Round 3 U O A A

Round 4 I I I O

Round 5 I O E

Target Number: 36

with you. In the event of more than one valid claim, the prize will be divided equally among the winners. In the event of no valid claims, today's prize will be added to Monday's.

For the purpose of judging, The Concise Oxford Dictionary — New Edition for the 1990s will be the sole reference, and the rules for Countdown will apply. In all matters the Editor's decision will be final.

If your copy of The Times did not contain a game card, contact your newsagent or call 071-867 0404.

Countdown game devised by Armand Jammot

4

CHANNEL FOUR TELEVISION COUNTDOWN is a registered trademark of Yorkshire Television Ltd

### COUNTDOWN PRIZEWINNERS

The £500 Day Two Times game prize was won by Mrs Barbara Tischler of Aldbury, Hertfordshire with 40 letters. Mrs Tischler, a public relations officer, had the following consonants on her card and by using the vowels for Day Two made the following five words.

Round 1: S L S N J (U A U E) — SENSUAL

Round 2: N S Y S D T (E I I) — DISINVEST

Round 3: B N Y T S (A O E A) — BAYONETS

Round 4: P R D R S (I E E) — RESPIRED

Round 5: T G G R N D (O A E) — DRAGONET

The £500 prize for Day Two of the TV game was shared by five winners. They are:

Miss Victoria Cox of Manthorpe, Lincolnshire; Mr Allan McDowell of Walsall, West Midlands; Mr Adrian Daniel of Great Bridgeford, West Midlands; Mr Paul Callaghan of Urmston, Manchester; and Mr Norman Hemmings of Beeston, Nottingham.

# Psychotic killer of lonely hearts GP is jailed for life

By RICHARD DUCE

A JUDGE took the "exceptional" step yesterday of sentencing the psychopathic killer of a woman doctor to life imprisonment for manslaughter because he posed a continued threat to other women.

Judge Lawrence Verney, QC, the Recorder of London, also ordered that Brian Vale, who battered Ann Mead to death after meeting her through a lonely hearts advertisement, should not be eligible for parole until 2004.

Vale, 45, appeared for sentence at the Old Bailey yesterday after psychiatric reports. Graham Bual, QC, his barrister, failed to convince the judge that he should be sent to a special hospital for further assessment.

The judge told Vale, a former civilian worker at a north London police station, that medical and probation reports showed he was "completely self-obsessed".

Vale's two former wives had told of his violent tendencies and evidence showed that he developed "intense and smothering attachments which bear little relationship to reality and which finally become hostile and destructive".

At the earlier hearing, when Vale admitted manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility, the court heard how Dr Mead, 35, a well-liked and respected GP, was searching for a husband when she placed her advertisement in the *New Statesman*.

Although Vale claimed they became lovers, Dr Mead's friends insisted that the relationship was platonic and she called it off once he showed signs of becoming violent.

Vale, of Bethnal Green, east London, was waiting outside Dr Mead's flat in Camberwell, south London, when she returned alone from dinner with friends last October. During a confrontation he repeatedly smashed her head against the pavement and a garden wall. He later told detectives: "I

didn't want to hurt her. I loved her. But she didn't love me."

When Vale appeared at the Old Bailey in July, John Nutting, for the prosecution, said Dr Mead was a "popular and successful" GP working at a shared practice in Herne Hill. "The one sadness in her life was that at the age of 35 she had not found anyone with whom to share her life. She wanted children."

The judge said medical evi-



Ann Mead: she wanted to find a husband



Vale: developed an intense attachment

dence suggested that Vale's personality disorder could not be treated. He continued to pose a threat to any woman with whom he tried to establish a relationship.

"That the courts can impose a life sentence in the case of diminished responsibility was made clear in the Court of Appeal in 1983. It is a sentence only passed in exceptional circumstances but in my judgment those circumstances exist here," the judge said.

David Mead, Dr Mead's brother, said after sentence was passed: "He will not be allowed to put another family through what I and my mother have had to endure. I hope he is never released."

Anabel Harries said in a statement issued on behalf of Dr Mead's family and friends: "The personal advertisement was undertaken with a spirit of adventure and was by no means the desperate measure of a lonely woman."

"After she rejected him, he was on one occasion violent towards her, after which she broke contact with him. Later, the insidious evil side of his character unfolded and he began to pester her obsessively. He was morbidly jealous of her other friends and could not accept her rejection of him."

"His disturbed perception resulted in her violent death at his hands. We believe that the nature of his disordered personality represents a danger to society in the long term."

Last night Sir Frederick Lawton, a former Appeal Court judge, said the sentence passed on Vale was "unusual but not that unusual" when dealing with a case of manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility. The sentence for such an offence could range from probation to life imprisonment.

He said that, under the Mental Health Act, Vale could have been sent to a secure hospital only if his illness could be treated.



Rachel Hingley, 13, whose photograph took first prize in the junior section

## Girl's photo swoops to conquer

RACHEL Hingley, 13, of Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, has won first prize in an international photographic competition organised by The Hawk and Owl Trust (Bill Frost writes). Her study of a captive buzzard was singled out for special praise by a panel of judges chaired by the professional wildlife photographer Dr Heather Angel.

Rachel's photograph will be among 60 of the world's hawks, falcons, buzzards, eagles and owls on show at the Natural History Museum in London throughout this month

to celebrate 25 years of conservation effort and achievement. Founded in 1969 to help to save the peregrine, the trust is the only British body dedicated solely to preserving wild birds of prey and their habitats.

A new survey by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds shows a marked increase in the swan population since anglers were banned from using lead weights in 1987. The number of mute swans, the kind most commonly found, is put at 27,000, nearly 40 per cent higher than ten years ago.

## BR driver draws line at metric speedo

By A STAFF REPORTER

A TRAIN driver delayed 400 passengers for half an hour because he claimed that his cab had the wrong kind of speedometer.

The relief driver refused to take the controls because he said the speedometer was calibrated in kilometres per hour rather than miles per hour. The same train had already been driven from London to Ashford, Kent, by another driver without incident. British Rail began an inquiry yesterday.

The Charing Cross to Margate train, due to leave at 6.14pm on Wednesday, stood at Ashford station while British Rail officials discussed with the embarrassed guard what to do.

After 15 minutes they decided to disconnect the rear four coaches of the train and shunt them to the front, allowing the driver to use the alternative cab, which had a speedometer calibrated in miles per hour.

One passenger, Ian Todd, a Dover businessman, said: "He just refused to drive the train, oblivious to the fact that the driver he was relieving had driven it safely and on time all the way from London."

"The passengers were furious and the poor guard apologised to us and tried to explain that it was all to do with 'technical problems'. But the driver was walking up and down declaring that he wouldn't touch the train with a speedo which gave only kilometres per hour."

"Some of us reflected on the fact that Ashford is only a few miles from the Channel Tunnel and that in this age of European integration the last thing we expected was for a driver to throw a wobbly at kilometres."

BR said: "We are trying to find out why the problem arose since our speedometers should show both kilometres and miles per hour. But even if they didn't, our drivers are trained to drive using both."

The rail unions RMT and ASLEF knew of no previous problems with drivers using metric speedometers.

## Greenham fence to come down

The 10ft-high fence around the former cruise missile base at Greenham Common is to be removed, but the need to clear military equipment and strip the runway means that public access is not likely before 1999.

Ministry of Defence lawyers promised at a hearing in Newbury County Court, Berkshire, to remove the nine miles of fencing after residents campaigned for the unmanned base to be returned to nature. It housed 96 American cruise missiles between 1983 and 1992.

## Boy bandits

A businessman aged 42 was robbed of his wallet by two boys aged about 15, one wielding a handgun, as he walked to work through Weston Park, Sheffield. The boys jumped over a wall and sped off in a red hatchback.

## Boot blunder

David Langan, 25, of Wakefield, West Yorkshire, who microwaved a friend's boots after a drinking spree, was conditionally discharged by Leeds Crown Court. He admitted arson.

## Big wheel

Janie Eaton, 17, a farmer's daughter from Tollerhast D'Arcey, Essex, who learnt to drive at the wheel of a tractor, has been given a £250 grant by Malden Council to help her to compete in the 2,000-mile RAC Rally this month.

## Age wager

William Fitchford celebrated his 92nd birthday in Deal, Kent, by staking £150 at odds of 66/1 that he will live to 100. He stands to win almost £10,000 from William Hill bookmakers.

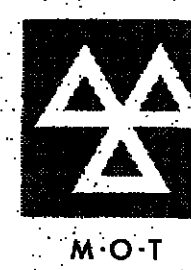
## Game and set

Pub patrons watching the England v United States football match at The Barge in Eastleigh, Hampshire, looked on as two thieves walked off with the £400 television set.

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Granada 404/Citroen/ Peugeot 405/Rover 620, 820	£109.99	£82.49	£27.50
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## DJ next door jailed for blasting road all night long

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

A WOULD-BE disc jockey was jailed for three months yesterday after blasting out pop hits and wartime classics from his bedroom for up to 14 hours a day and bellowing his commentary on a powerful sound system.

In what is thought to be the heaviest penalty the courts have imposed over noise, Michael Higgins, 32, was imprisoned after breaching a High Court order to keep the noise down for the sake of his neighbours.

Floors and walls in adjoining homes vibrated as he played hits by Kylie Minogue, Sting, Diana Ross, Lisa Stansfield and The Stylistics. The family living next door to Higgins in Bristol also had to endure "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" and "On Mother

Kelly's Doorstep" as he practised his disc jockey act at 3am. City council officials tried to "stop" him after complaints from neighbours who had endured the noise for three years. Health and environmental inspectors seized his equipment twice and successfully prosecuted him twice, but to no avail.

Yesterday Higgins was brought before a High Court judge at Bristol for breaching an injunction to reduce the noise. He was sentenced under the tougher noise pollution powers granted to courts by the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Householders guilty of causing a repeated nuisance may be fined up to £5,000 or imprisoned for up to six months.

Last year a fan of Whitney Houston was jailed for seven days after playing the pop star's hit single "I Will Always Love You" almost non-stop for six weeks.

Noise pollution and objections to it are increasing. Earlier this week figures from the Institution of Environmental Health Officers showed that complaints in England and Wales about noisy neighbours had risen by 20 per cent in a year to 115,515.

Yesterday people living near Higgins said that he dreamt of becoming a top nightclub and Radio 1 disc jockey and had tried out all his hits and patter on them. Janet Williams, 40, a nurse living next door, said: "Silence really is golden. Another note from Kylie Minogue would have sent us all mad. He played all sorts of music until 3am or 4am most nights. It was mainly soul music and 70s and 80s disco hits which he played on a big disco-type stereo system."

"One night he was playing 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' and 'On Mother Kelly's Doorstep' for hours. It drove my husband absolutely mad and kept my nine-year-old daughter awake all night." Another neighbour, Mumtaz Shah, 54, said: "The noise every night was terrible. It's been a three-year nightmare which has upset the whole family. His music has made the floor shake and pictures vibrate on the wall. We haven't had a good night's sleep for years. I'm just glad we've finally got some peace and quiet."

Diane Bunyan, chairwoman of Bristol City Council's health and environmental services committee, said: "Let this be an example — we are determined to stamp out noise pests."

## Street set on fire by worst neighbours in Britain

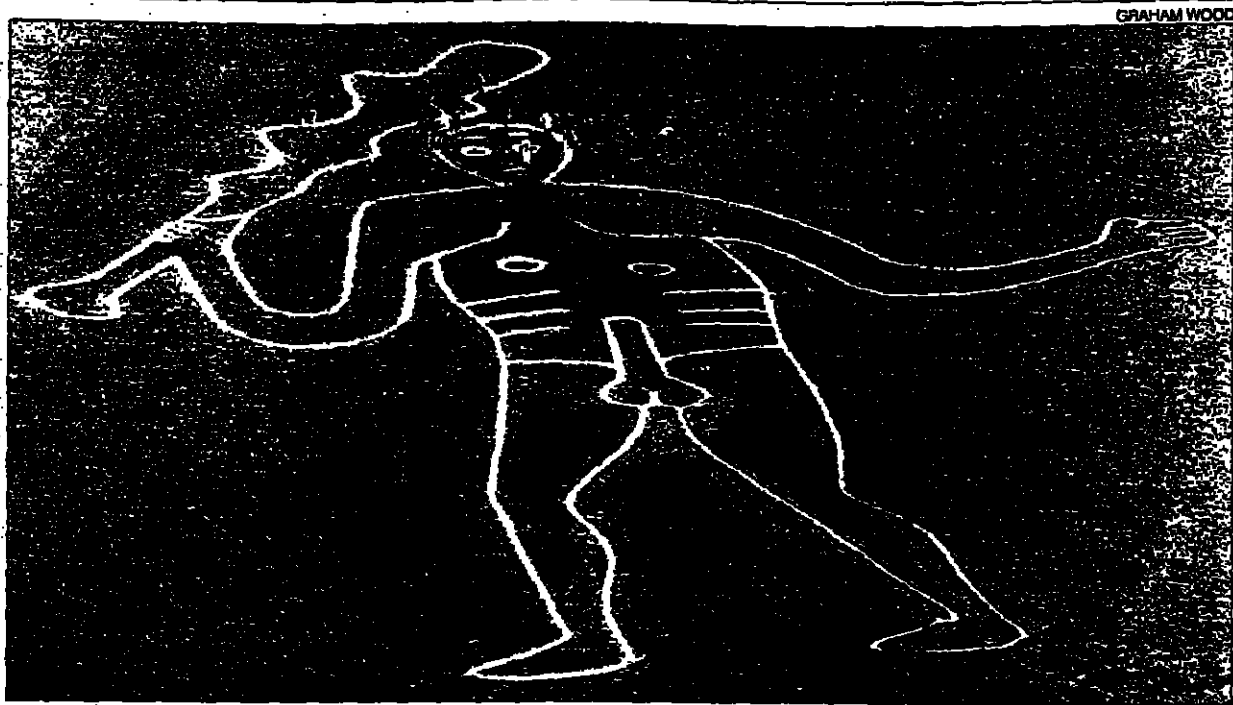
THREE members of a family who have earned the reputation of being Britain's worst neighbours appeared in court yesterday after burning down their home in a £100,000 insurance swindle.

The Pitt family is so notorious that five potential jurors were barred from trying the case when they admitted seeing a Channel 4 documentary on the Pitts.

John and Mary Pitt and their son David set the street on fire at Castle Terrace, Aslington, Northumberland, by spraying petrol around their home. Newcastle Crown Court was told that six days earlier the three had taken out separate policies to cover the building and contents.

Minutes before the fire, neighbours saw the Pitts loading their furniture into a van. Then the whole family — parents, eight children, four rottweilers, an old English sheepdog and two cats — left the house to visit a relative who had not seen them for three years.

John and Mary Pitt, both 47, and David, 19, were convicted of conspiracy to commit arson. The parents were also found guilty of attempting to obtain an insurance payout by deception. All three were remanded in custody pending reports.



The Cerne Abbas Giant is thought to have been altered over the centuries, losing a navel and a severed head

## Restoration may wound giant's pride

ONE of Britain's most famous figures may receive the unkindest cut in the name of authenticity (Robin Young writes). The "surgery" has been proposed as part of a possible restoration of the Cerne Abbas Giant, a 180ft-high figure cut in the chalk of a Dorset hillside some 2,000 years ago.

Equipment similar to that used in the hunt for bodies in Cromwell Street,

Gloucester, has established that parts of the carving have changed considerably down the centuries. In particular, the giant's penis appears to have extended from 19ft to 26ft.

The National Trust has commissioned more research before taking any decision on whether to restore the giant to his original form. Among other changes could be restoration of a 5ft

navel, shown in a drawing made in 1764, but now believed to have been subsumed by the penis's extension when the figure was recut between 1905 and 1910.

The survey by Rodney Castleden, a teacher at Roedean school in Sussex, has also suggested that the giant originally had a cloak draped over his outstretched left arm and clutched a severed human head in his right fist.

## Autumn brings bargains in British lamb

By Victoria Davis

AUTUMN is the time to buy British lamb: it costs about half as much as in the rest of the year. Prices range from £1.09 a lb for bone-in joints and £1.99 for boneless roasts.

There is a good selection of off-rich fish, including sprats at 75p a lb, herrings from 80p; £1.00 a lb and Cornish mackerel at around 90p a lb.

Advertised best buys include:

Asda: fresh chicken breast fillets £5.99 (6); Sara Lee lemon meringue pie 99p; Vallee D'Eve Blanc 75cl £1.99; cheese and tomato, thin and crispy pizza 99p; Ragu sauce for bolognese 99p.

Budgens: Scottish smoked salmon 8oz £4.99; fromage fraise (18) £1.04; country choice prime bacon joint £1.39 a lb; white seedless grapes 75p a lb. Co-op: frozen chicken and veg pie 79p; McCain crinkle oven chips 99p; Woodpecker cider 4-pack £2.19.

Gateway/Somerfield: kiwi fruit (6) 59p; Somerfield onion bhajis (6) 79p; McVities toffee cheesecake £1.49; Somerfield lamb samosas (4) 79p.

Harrods: rainbow trout £1.60 a lb; glazed ham in Harrods country honey £7.60 a lb; Italian beef mortadella £7.60 a lb; German tongue sausage £9.30 a lb.

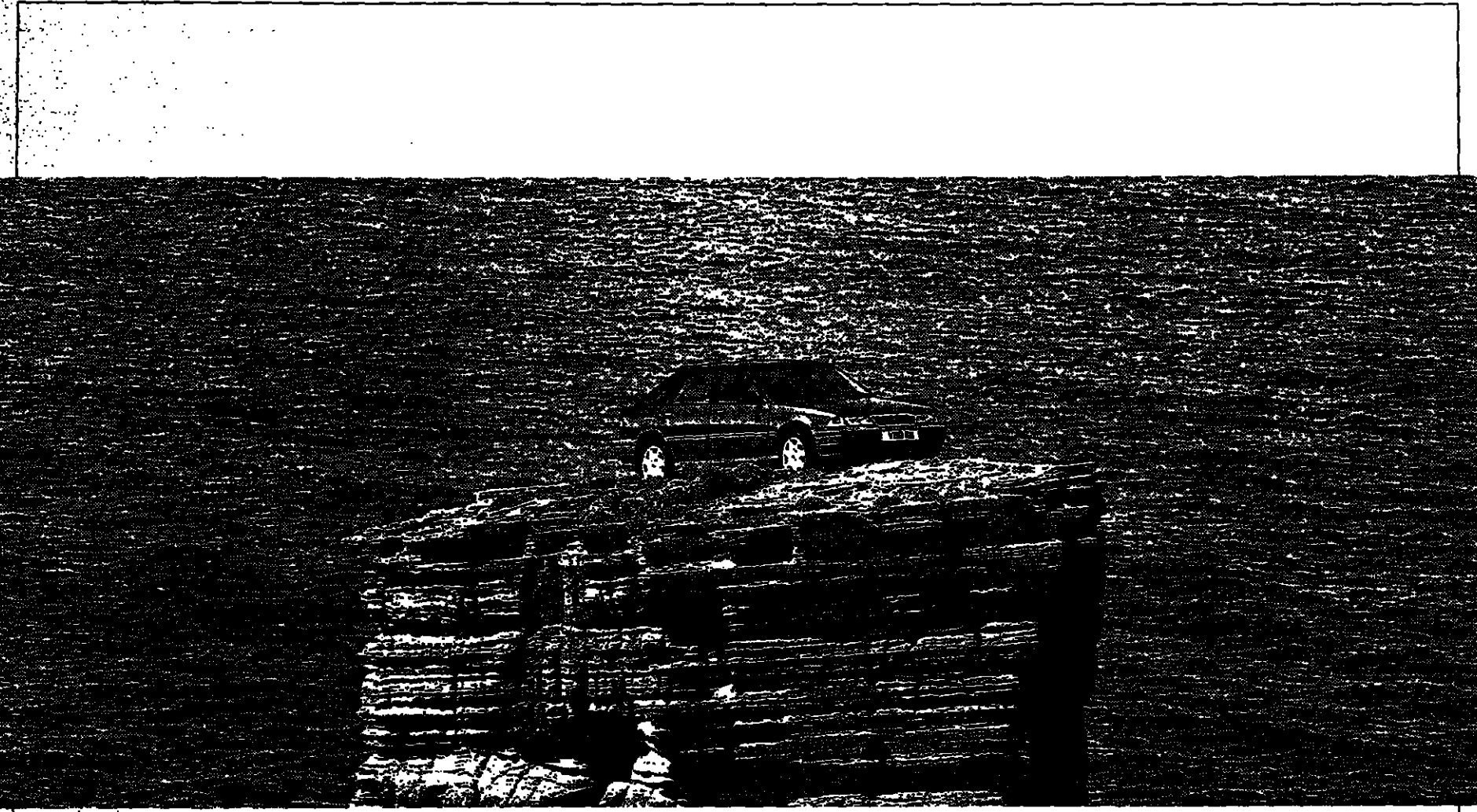
Iceland: sirloin steaks (2) £1.49; cut beans 99p for 3lb; choc 'n' nuts cones (4) 99p; jumbo sausage rolls (12) 99p.

Marks & Spencer: chocolate tea cakes (16) £1.29; fresh veg pasties (2) 99p; Bramley apple tart £1.29; Hass avocados 59p.

### WEEKEND SHOPPING

Safeway: Irish mature cheddar £1.69 a lb; strawberry and Black Forest gâteau £1.39; Heineken lager 12-pack £7.99; lean minced beef £1.78 a lb.

Tesco: topside/silver-side beef £1.98 a lb; salmon steaks £2.95 a lb; raspberry ripple ice cream £1.14 (2); closed cup mushrooms 99p a lb; French set yoghurt (12) £1.99. Waitrose: pork leg steaks £1.59 a pack; cauliflower 39p; pineapples 69p; fruit and fibre muesli (750g) £1.29.



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## Photo-opportunity knocks for two luxury pickets

By Philip Bassett

AS THE railways were hit by the 13th signallers' strike yesterday, Jimmy Knapp and John Monks left the safety of the conference hall and went picketing.

Except it wasn't quite real picketing. The RMT's picket was mounted outside a British Rail staff car park behind Blackpool station, a good 800 yards away from the Blackpool North No 2 signalbox, which as it has been throughout the three months of strike days, was yesterday deserted.

"The strike in Blackpool has been absolutely solid throughout," Mr Knapp, leader of the signallers' RMT union, declared. What this meant after 6.00am yesterday was that the RMT pickets were picketing no-one.

In total, the pickets numbered 11. Not only was this in breach of the Government's legal guidelines, which stipulate a maximum of six pickets, it was precisely one third of the media corps who turned up to film, photograph and question them.

By 6.30, the number of reporters, photographers and

TV camera crews totalled 33. At 6.45 precisely, Mr Monks, the TUC general secretary, and Mr Knapp swept up in a gleaming red Rover Sterling — picketing by luxury saloon.

Out they leapt, marching through the massed ranks of the media to talk to the RMT members picketing hard the 2 vans, 11 cars, 1 Portakabin and 4 large blue rubbish bins

**'Railtrack are trying to run a propaganda war and it's not working'**

massing behind them. "How are you, lads," they cried.

One of the pickets, Mr Knapp, round the shoulders and hugged him hard. Then it was an intense round of TV interviews, until the urgent chirruping of mobile phones drew the two union leaders to radio cars to link them to news programme presenters in London. But the by now heavy Lancashire rain proved

too much for the technology, and Mr Knapp had to do interviews on a portable phone briefly purloined from the BBC. Brief snatches of that now-familiar deep Ayrshire rumble groaned their way across the car park: "Railtrack... 5.7 per cent... Government interference... solid."

When one invisible interviewer put Railtrack's latest claims of track miles open to him, Mr Knapp growled back mildly: "Railtrack are trying to run a propaganda war to break down our members, and it's not working."

The media battle at the car park picket was in full swing. Standing with his members again, Mr Knapp was asked whether with more than 50 per cent of trains now running, the strike was running into the buffers.

"We are not going to run into the buffers," he said. "We are going to get a just and reasonable settlement."

With the picket drawing towards a close there was a sudden flurry of action as two police cars and a van



Mr Monks, centre, and Mr Knapp, right, march in support of the rail strikers with Labour's Frank Dobson

packed with a dozen officers swept into the car park, ready to fight off the pitched assault on authority that the re-launched TUC was posing. "Morning all," said two genial inspectors, strolling up. As the only criminal

activity in the area was the gaggle of journalists' cars parked on double yellow lines, the crack troops of the Lancashire swat squad stayed in their van, swigging tea before heading back to the station.

All interviews done, photo-opportunities seized, for the union leaders it was a dive back through the rain to the cars. Away swept the red Rover, to shouts of "we'll see you on the march later!" Off roared the photographers,

shouting "Breakfast, breakfast!" By 7.45 no-one was left outside the car park. The press were back in their hotels and, 20 miles away, the first trains of the strike day were racing along the Euston-Glasgow main line.

## Post Office sell-off 'is threat to quality'

By Ross Tieman  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE leader of Britain's 190,000 postal workers called on the Government yesterday to abandon plans to privatise the Post Office.

Alan Johnson, the general secretary of the Union of Communication Workers, said the quality of service would suffer if the privatisation went ahead. He claimed that Post Office chiefs and the Industry Department had worked together to present continued public ownership "in a bad light".

But he said that as Britain's oldest public monopoly, the Post Office had shown its worth for four centuries in the public sector. The Post Office review, he said, began as an attempt to impose the Government's values on the Post Office. But, "This country would be a better place to live if Post Office values were imposed on the Government."

Under government proposals there was no guarantee that second deliveries would be maintained.

## Unions to meet CBI over new Euro-laws

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

LEADERS of the TUC are to hold talks with the Confederation of British Industry that could herald a significant shift in big companies' opposition to new employment law from Brussels.

Howard Davies, director-general of the CBI, and John Monks, general secretary of the TUC, will meet probably at the end of this month to discuss how employers and unions can handle European laws introduced under the Maastricht Treaty.

A senior official from the CBI with responsibility for handling employment and labour law issues was in Blackpool yesterday for the TUC conference.

Employers have, in line with the Government, previously opposed Brussels social and employment law, arguing that increased regulation destroys jobs by pushing up costs. CBI insiders acknowledge that, although most members remain opposed, some of the larger companies with substantial interests in Europe are now arguing for a change, because they believe such opposition is increasingly untenable and could damage their business.

Some big companies in the CBI are arguing privately that, in spite of the Government's opt-out from the Maastricht social chapter, many British employers will be affected by new social legislation from Europe. They feel it would be better for them if they could influence European initiatives that they will have to put into practice.

The TUC-CBI talks will centre on a Brussels mechanism called "framework agreements", which the European Commission would increasingly like to use for the introduction of new employment laws.

Framework agreements, which are legally enshrined in

the Maastricht Treaty, provide for employers and unions at a European level to agree collectively to new employment law changes, rather than for them to be introduced by legally binding European directives.

Jacques Delors, president of the Commission, wants to use a framework agreement to introduce an employment initiative on "lifetime learning" — giving more workers greater access to training — before he retires this year.

The first attempt to reach such an agreement on the introduction of European works councils, fell apart in the summer after the CBI pulled out of the negotiations. But after an inquiry from the European employers' body Unice, the CBI is saying privately that it is not opposed to framework agreements, and has agreed to talks with the TUC to work out a new way of dealing with them.

Some employers believe that such deals produce less punitive moves than legislation and have the added advantage of not being fully binding.

If the talks produce an agreement to negotiate on framework deals, it will mark a considerable shift in employers' attitudes and an important move towards the kind of social partnership that is a feature of most European countries and for which Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and Mr Monks called for at the conference this week.

The CBI confirmed last night that the talks would take place this month. Government ministers are likely to be wary about the development, but some in the CBI are becoming increasingly irritated at feeling that because of the social chapter opt-out they alone are having to shoulder Britain's responsibilities in Europe over employment law.

## Labour worried by 2m 'missing' voters

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

LABOUR is demanding a national campaign to ensure that more than two million people who are missing from the electoral roll can exercise their right to vote.

Yesterday Jack Straw, the shadow Environment Secretary, proposed the establishment of a "rolling register" so that people can secure their right to vote at any time rather than only when local authorities compile their lists.

Mr Straw published a report showing that the number of people not registered has risen from fewer than one million in 1979 to more than two million today. He described it as an "indictment of Home Office indifference".

He said that last year the Government spent £550,000 on publicising voter registration, compared with £17 mil-

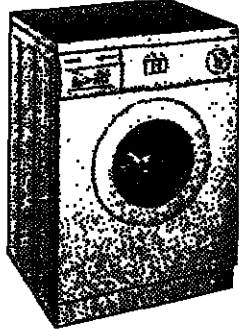
lion spent on advertising BT shares two years ago and £1.6 million on promoting the Citizen's Charter last year.

"It seems that the Government is more happy to promote the right to complain than the right to vote," he said.

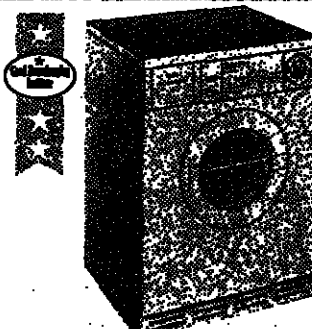
Mr Straw's report, *The Missing Millions: Britain's Disenfranchised Citizens*, compares registration levels with census and other population data. It estimates that 24 per cent of people in their early twenties are not registered.

He cited as an example of how the figures could be improved a campaign in Leeds in 1991. The city council added 26,000 to the register with the help of widespread publicity and a simplified registration system.

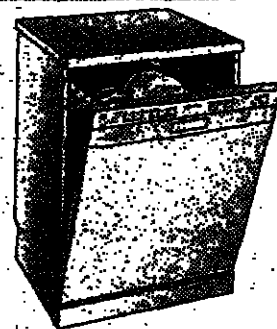
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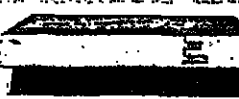
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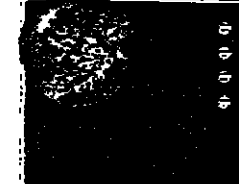
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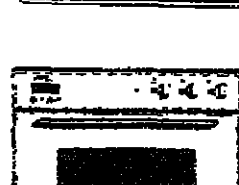
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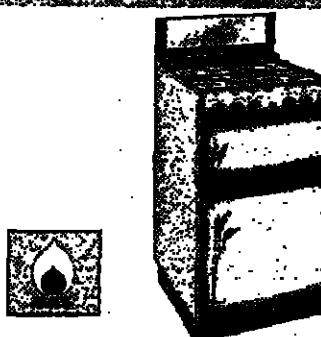
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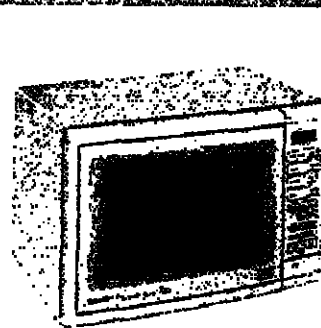
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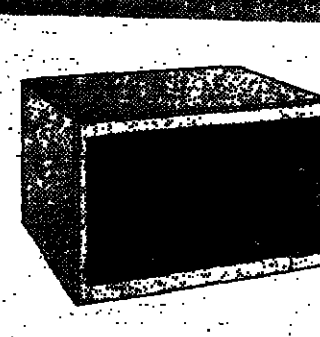
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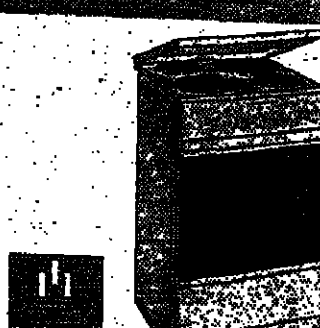
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Fifty years on, failure at Arnhem is seen as one of the century's most far-reaching disasters

## Veteran recalls courage and sacrifice of a bridge too far

By John Young

THE only surviving senior British officer from the Battle of Arnhem, General Sir John Hackett, will return to The Netherlands next week to take symbolic command of the veterans he led into action half a century ago.

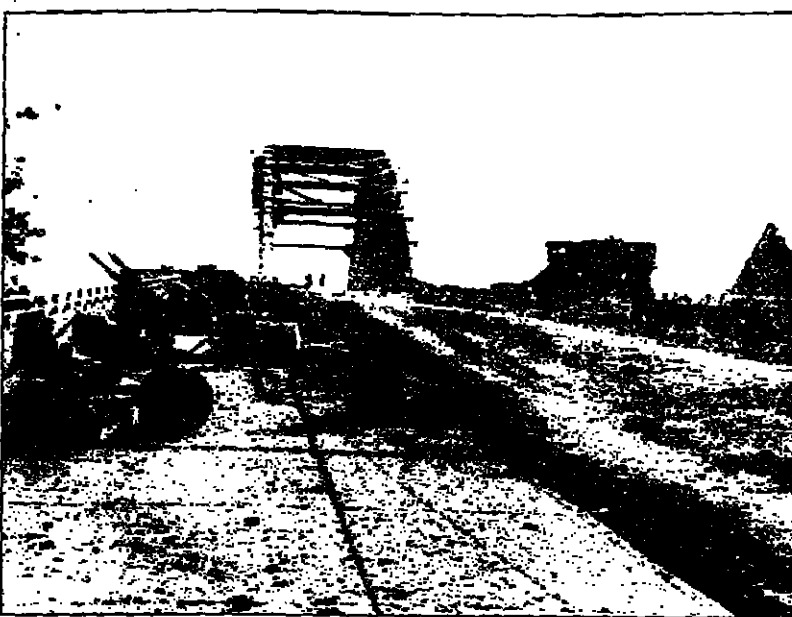
On Sunday September 18, accompanied by survivors from countries including Australia, Canada and Poland, he will read the lesson at a service in the Airborne Cemetery, Oosterbeek, 50 years to the day since he was dropped on to Dutch soil as commander of the Fourth Parachute Brigade, the second wave of the ill-fated assault by the First Airborne Division.

For the millions who saw the film *A Bridge Too Far* and before that, *Theirs is the Glory*, Arnhem is a story of matchless courage and sacrifice, as well as muddle and misjudgment. Sir John, a distinguished historian, regards it as one of the greatest and most far-reaching disasters of the century.

Valta and the division of Europe for nearly 50 years afterwards was the direct



Paratroops dig in to fight for the bridge over the Rhine but, in the slaughter that followed, 1,485 Allied troops were lost, many to be buried as "unknown soldiers"



Nijmegen on September 20, Sir John thinks. But he does not blame them. "They only did what they were taught, which was not to advance without a proper reconnaissance. They played it by the rules."

Barely 48 hours after they had landed, and all hope of capturing the bridge abandoned, the Fourth Brigade found itself digging in to defend the so-called Oosterbeek Perimeter, which was held for five days under increasingly murderous assault. "I saw my beloved brigade being slaughtered all around me."

Badly wounded himself, he was taken to hospital and spent the next four and a half months hidden under a Dutch alias. Eventually, with the help of the Dutch Resistance, he slipped away down the river to safety.

A total of 11,920 men took part in the Arnhem operation, from the First Airborne Division, the glider pilots and the First Independent Polish Parachute Brigade. Of those 1,485 were killed in action, 6,525 were captured or escaped and 3,910 were safely evacuated.

result of our failure to capture the bridgehead," Sir John said. "If we had been able to get the British Second Army across the Rhine and into the Ruhr, the war would have been over. At the time we were much nearer Berlin than the Russians and, if we had got there first, the whole

subsequent history of Europe and the Cold War would have been very different."

He has no doubt that the whole operation was appallingly planned. "It was absolutely essential that we should all be put down on the same day. As it was, the First Brigade landed on the 17th

and we followed a day later because there were not enough aircraft to take us all. We lost the absolutely essential element of surprise."

"Equally bad was the choice of dropping zones, which were five or six miles from the bridge. Compare that with the landings at

Pegasus Bridge, which were right on top of the target and were brilliantly successful. Afterwards I asked Richard Gale [commander of the Sixth Airborne Division in Normandy] what he would have done if he had been asked to land half a dozen miles from his objective and

he replied that he would have resigned."

On top of that there was a disastrous failure in communications, with equipment that could not reach the required range, which was in turn partly responsible for the lack of air cover. The failure to break

through to the bridge to relieve Lieutenant-Colonel John Frost's Second Battalion, and the Fourth Brigade's inability to make progress against the German defences, could have been remedied if the advancing ground troops had gone "hell for leather" after crossing the bridge at

## In memory of the fighters who fell

By John Young

NEXT week's events in The Netherlands to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem will begin on Wednesday when General Sir John Hackett unveils a monument at the Airborne Museum to acknowledge the help and shelter provided by Dutch civilians and Resistance fighters, many of whom lost their lives as a result.

A number of other ceremonies will follow over the next four days. The Prince of Wales will join the Dutch royal family at the weekend and attend a mass parachute drop and a solemn commemoration service.

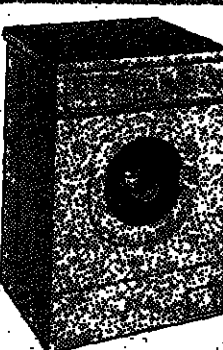
The main events of next week's commemorations are: **Wednesday, September 14:** 4pm, General Sir John Hackett unveils the memorial to Dutch civilians and resistance fighters at the Airborne Museum in Oosterbeek. **Thursday, September 15:** Midday and 2pm, presentation of Medals of Honour to Arnhem veterans. 3.30 pm, unveiling of memorial plaque at the John Frost Bridge. **Friday, September 16:** 6pm, silent procession through the



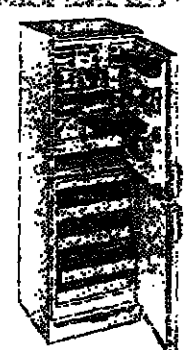
Sir John: will unveil a special monument

streets of Arnhem and wreath laying at the monument. **Saturday, September 17:** 10am, parachute drop by serving soldiers and veterans, watched by the Prince of Wales who will then attend a memorial service with Prince Bernhard of The Netherlands. 3pm, march past of veterans. **Sunday, September 18:** 11am, service of remembrance at the Airborne Cemetery in Oosterbeek, attended by the Prince of Wales and Queen Beatrix.

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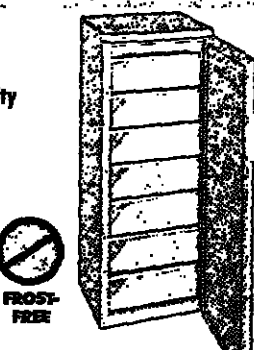


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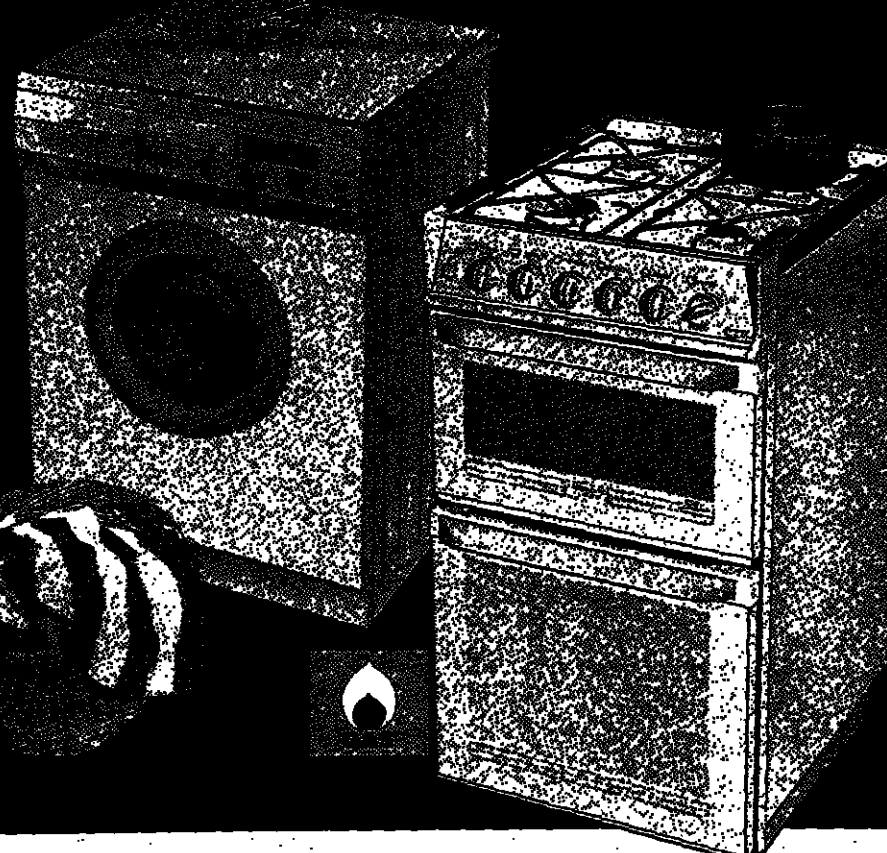


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## British Association: scientists look at child carers, wheedling youngsters and a threat to fertility

## Forgotten children bear the burden of caring for parents

By Nick Nuttall, Technology Correspondent

THOUSANDS of British children, some as young as three, are caring for parents who are terminally ill, researchers disclosed yesterday. Urgent action is needed to help these "forgotten" children — most of whom are slipping through the social services net — to save them from long-term psychological damage and physical abuse, they said.

Dr Saul Becker, director of the Young Carers Research Group at Loughborough University, who has been studying the plight of child carers, likened the children to Dickens's Little Dorrit, who at the age of 13 was suddenly forced to take on the role as mother to her family.

Physical violence from a parent with a brain tumour or a disease such as Huntington's chorea was common, the group's research showed. Many children, denied help from the state because they are too young to claim financial support, are being forced to beg to feed themselves and their parents. More than half have to lift ill adults upstairs, out of bed and into showers, despite being physically too weak to do so without strain.

Dr Becker said interviews with child carers showed that despite their often appalling and impoverished lives, most loved their parents and wanted to care for them and to keep their families together. Yet in the rare cases where social workers and schools identify one of these children, the response is often to threaten to put the child into care or to seek a court order for poor school attendance.

Dr Becker said these "punishments" could be the last

psychological straw for such young strained minds.

The findings come from a string of studies including one with 11 children tracked down in Nottingham, whose ages ranged from three to 18 years. Dr Becker cited the case of Jimmy, who from the age of 13 nursed his dying father for three years after his mother left home. "Caring for his father was a profoundly traumatic experience," Dr Becker said. The boy had to clean his father, lift him around the house, beg for food and deal with his father's sometimes violent fits caused by a brain tumour.

Society's response was to prosecute Jimmy for trying to defraud the Department of Social Security. "But he was

never offered any constructive support by a paid professional," Dr Becker said.

Jimmy told the researchers: "When I think about all those years I cared for my Dad, it makes me angry, not because I had to care for him — I wanted to care for him — but because I was left alone to cope with his illness for so long."

Dr Becker said the time had come for society to recognise its responsibilities to such children and for the Government to meet commitments under the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recently came into force in Britain.

The parents whose children are forced to care for them also deserve help, with many adults ashamed and guilty but impotent to improve their children's situation.

Dr Becker proposed a bill of rights for these disadvantaged children and urged health professionals to identify child carers and to provide proper support, including information packs on legal rights and access to services such as respite care and community care funds.

Dr Becker said the exact number of children acting as carers was unknown. But he indicated that the total could exceed 10,000 and that with the move to care in the community the number was likely to rise. "The critical question for professionals is how can child carers be enabled to care and be protected in their roles without their family life being torn apart by heavy-handed child protection procedures?"

Human life "has to have a certain minimal quality be-



"Captain Cook" brings to life his travels round the world for a young visitor to the British Association's Festival of Science at Loughborough

## Science has altered death says primate

MODERN medical treatments have altered the nature of death, the Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, told the association yesterday (Nick Nuttall writes).

He said that in the case of Anthony Bland, the Hillsborough victim who died in 1993, it had been right to deny treatment because "no medical treatment could do anything to enhance his attributes as a person".

Human life "has to have a certain minimal quality be-

fore it can be regarded as such. If we are willing for the purposes of organ transplants to define death as the loss of brain function, in what sense can we ascribe personhood to an embryo which has not yet begun to develop a nervous system?"

Modern medicine had turned death from an event into a process. "Christians should not be alarmed at the thought of death as a process. We are, after all, exhorted to die daily."

## Household detergents 'may wash away male virility'

CHEMICALS in washing powders, cosmetics and detergents may be the chief culprits for a fall in men's sperm count, a biologist said yesterday (Nick Nuttall writes).

Professor Dennis Lincoln of the Medical Research Council's reproductive biology unit in Edinburgh said new evidence showed that sperm counts in European men were falling by 2 per cent a year.

The sperm counts of young men were significantly lower than their fathers' 20 years

ago and couples in developed countries would find it increasingly difficult to conceive in 11 years' time, he said.

Professor Lincoln said there was growing evidence that pollution and chemicals in the environment may be mimicking the female hormone oestrogen, leading to the male fetus being exposed to high levels of feminising substances via the mother.

Several groups of chemicals had been linked with the fall in sperm counts, including

pesticides and synthetic hormones in the contraceptive pill. But there was growing evidence that surfactants used in items ranging from detergents to cosmetics might be even more damaging.

Tests by chemical industries indicated that their oestrogen-mimicking potential was low. But he told the British Association: "These so-called wetting chemicals appear to become more potent as they are degraded in the environment by bacteria."



Dickens's Little Dorrit: her plight is rife today

## How the young get what they want

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

CHILDREN as young as seven have a range of wheedling techniques to get their own way that would do credit to a double-glazing salesman.

They include begging, bribery, constant repetition of demands ("bugging", or "working on them", as children call it), negotiation, tantrums or, most devious of all, doing more than is expected to curry favour.

This well-filled arsenal of psychological tricks will come as no surprise to any parent. But it was given academic respectability yesterday at the science festival by Professor Robert Walker, a social scientist from Loughborough University, who has persuaded 85 young

people between seven and 18 to spill their secrets.

"We knew our own children were cunning," Professor Walker said. "Now we know they are not exceptional. All children seem very good at getting their own way although as parents we are not always prepared to admit it."

Children choose their targets carefully — some go for fathers, some mothers — and prepare the ground in advance. They are experts at timing and at finding the right circumstances.

Children are especially adept at "bugging". They know that parents were more effective when they were younger. Many of those interviewed regretted that the passing of the years had diminished the effectiveness of most of their best methods.

the research team: "You have to be skilled and it depends what mood they're in." The girl, who wanted a Gameboy computer game, wore down her parents by repeatedly singing the tunes that the device played until they were fed up with it.

Another child said: "I just said 'I love you Dad. You're the best Dad in the entire world,' and that sort of thing. I just kept pestering until he got sick of me and went out and bought the silly thing."

If every technique fails, the last resort is anger. Children agreed that tantrums were more effective when they were younger. Many of those interviewed regretted that the passing of the years had diminished the effectiveness of most of their best methods.

## Public distrusts farmers on food



Researcher Jackie Goode with chef Harry Clarke and forbidden fruit

PEOPLE have a good idea of what they should be eating, but do not trust farmers, food producers or the Government to provide it (Nigel Hawkes writes).

A current survey in Leicestershire shows that 80 per cent of men and 65 per cent of women are confident that they knew what they should be eating. Almost all those questioned so far appeared aware of "healthy eating" messages: 97 per cent said they should eat less fat, and 98.5 per cent less fried food.

Starchy foods such as potatoes, pasta, rice and bread caused confusion. Only just over half gave the "correct" answer, that we should eat more of them.

Yesterday Jackie Goode of Loughborough University of Technology and Emma Sherratt of the University of Leicester presented the survey's prelimi-

nary results to the British Association in Loughborough.

There are low levels of confidence in farmers, food producers and the Government. Only a third agreed that "We can rely on farmers to produce safe food for the public" — 35 per cent disagreed.

Asked the same question about food companies, only 20 per cent agreed; 60 per cent disagreed. In both cases, women were more sceptical than men.

Asked if the Government could be relied upon to make sure we have safe food, 60 per cent said it could not, and only 14 per cent said it could. Again, women were more mistrustful than men.

The researchers said people "do not trust those with an obvious vested interest in food production, nor the Government, to ensure provision of food safety."

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**KEENE on CHESS**

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

**Lautier leads**

The French grandmaster Joel Lautier has already inflicted defeat this year on both Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov.

After four rounds of the Zurich tournament currently in progress, Lautier shared the lead with Kasparov and Viktor Korneev.

In round one he won the following game against Russian grandmaster Viktor Gavrilov.

**White: Joel Lautier**  
**Black: Viktor Gavrilov**  
Zurich, 1994

**English opening**

1. c4	Nf6
2. Nc3	e5
3. Nf3	e6
4. g3	b6
5. Bg2	Bb7
6. O-O	Bd7
7. d4	cxd4
8. Qxd4	d5
9. B3	Nd6
10. Rd1	Qc8
11. e4	Nc5
12. Qe3	Nc6
13. Nd4	a6
14. Bb2	Re8
15. Qe2	Bf8
16. Re1	g6
17. Re1	Re8
18. Bf1	h6
19. f4	Nd7
20. Nf3	e5
21. g4	Qd6
22. Rd1	Nf5
23. Qg4	Rc8
24. Bf1	Nd6
25. Qf3	Bh6
26. f5	Nd7
27. Nf5	Nf5
28. Bg5	Re5
29. Nd4	Qc5+
30. Kh1	Rc8
31. Bc3	Kf6
32. Qf2	Bd5
33. Qc5	Nf6
34. Nf6	Nf6

**Diagram of final position**

**Junior olympiad**

The Russian under-16 team has won the junior olympiad in Malta.

With one round to go, they have scored an unassailable 20 points. The English team is currently in fifth place with 15 points.

**Olympic announcement**

The British Chess Federation has announced the members of its squad which will compete for the chess olympics which take place in Salonic, Greece, in November.

The team consists entirely of grandmasters.

In board order it is: Michael Adams, Jon Speelman, John Nunn, Tony Miles, Julian Hodgson and David Norwood.

Winning move, page 44



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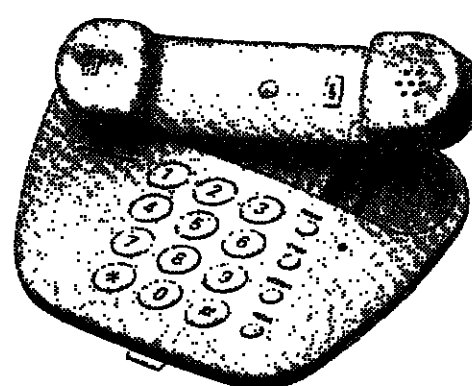
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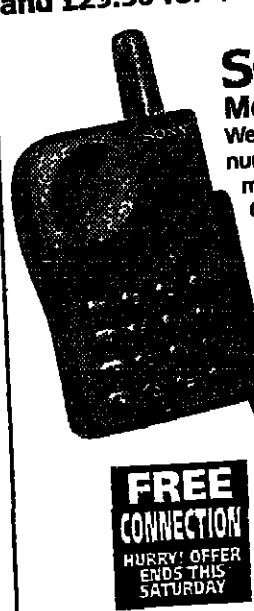


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# German and Dutch chemicals 'fuelling cocaine trade'



Howard: deplored trade aiding drug manufacture

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU  
IN BERLIN

GERMANY and The Netherlands are flouting European Union rules on the export of chemicals, used in South America for the production of cocaine, according to a senior official present at a meeting of EU foreign and justice ministers.

The substances are the so-called precursor chemicals. Although common in Western Europe, their export is strictly regulated under EU guidelines, and within South America they are subject to stringent import regulations. The allegations highlight the schism between ministerial rhetoric on crime prevention and the reality of an ineffective system of controls. The allegations were made at EU interior and justice ministers.

## Germany, advocating tough action against organised crime, is being accused of supplying raw materials to South American cartels

joined for the first time by their colleagues from Central and Eastern Europe, drew up a long-term strategy for the prevention of organised crime, especially drug trafficking.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, referred to unnamed countries where the rules have been broken. He admitted later that "it is wrong to assume that Europe is the only or even the major source for the precursor chemicals", yet he said that the amounts concerned were still substantial. He said that he would

raise the issue in talks with his counterparts from the countries concerned.

The Home Secretary told his European counterparts that "lip service in implementing the regulation is not enough. We must ensure that controls on the trade in precursor chemicals are successful in preventing diversion to the illicit market."

Referring to his recent visit to South America, he said: "I saw for myself that the regulation is not yet having the effect which we hoped for. It is clear that precursor and

essential chemicals from Europe are finding their way to South American countries, are being used by the traffickers to turn the coca leaf into cocaine, which is then finding its way back to the streets of Europe." Among the substances are two mass-produced chemicals, acetone and hydrochloric acid.

The fight against drug crime will also become the initial focal point of Europol, the agency based in The Hague which is to act as an information exchange between European police forces. The ministers also agreed, albeit tentatively, that Europol's remit should be widened gradually over time, to encompass other forms of organised crime, ranging from nuclear trafficking to terrorism.

The other crime-busting initiative taken at yesterday's meeting

was a proposal by Germany, which now holds the EU presidency, to launch Union proposals aimed at reducing car theft.

Among those would be the compulsory installation in cars of electronic immobilisers, which through a special code prevent an engine being started, alongside improved security equipment. In 1992, 1.8 million cars were on the EU-wide wanted list, of which 760,000 were not found. Last year, 144,000 vehicles were stolen, of which only 60 per cent were recovered by police.

Despite the consensus on the need to fight crime, EU ministers remain divided over the direction of Europol specifically and the so-called "third pillar", the codename for European co-operation on interior and justice matters, in general.

Germany is keen to bring the inter-governmental third pillar into the more tightly knit procedures of the EU, a strategy which is resisted strongly by Britain and France.

Mr Howard, at a press conference, underlined his opposition to Europol turning into an active European police force modelled on the American FBI. He claimed that "it is perfectly possible for Europol to develop on an intergovernmental basis", thus rebuking a comment from Manfred Kanther, the German Interior Minister, who had said that he could envisage the need for Europol to be equipped with an operational unit in the long run.

Mr Howard said yesterday that the more ambitious proposals for Europol's development did not have majority support in the EU.

## Goodbye to all that: spies, soldiers and black marketeers consign Berlin to history

### Major's offer soothes German feelings

BY ROGER BOYES

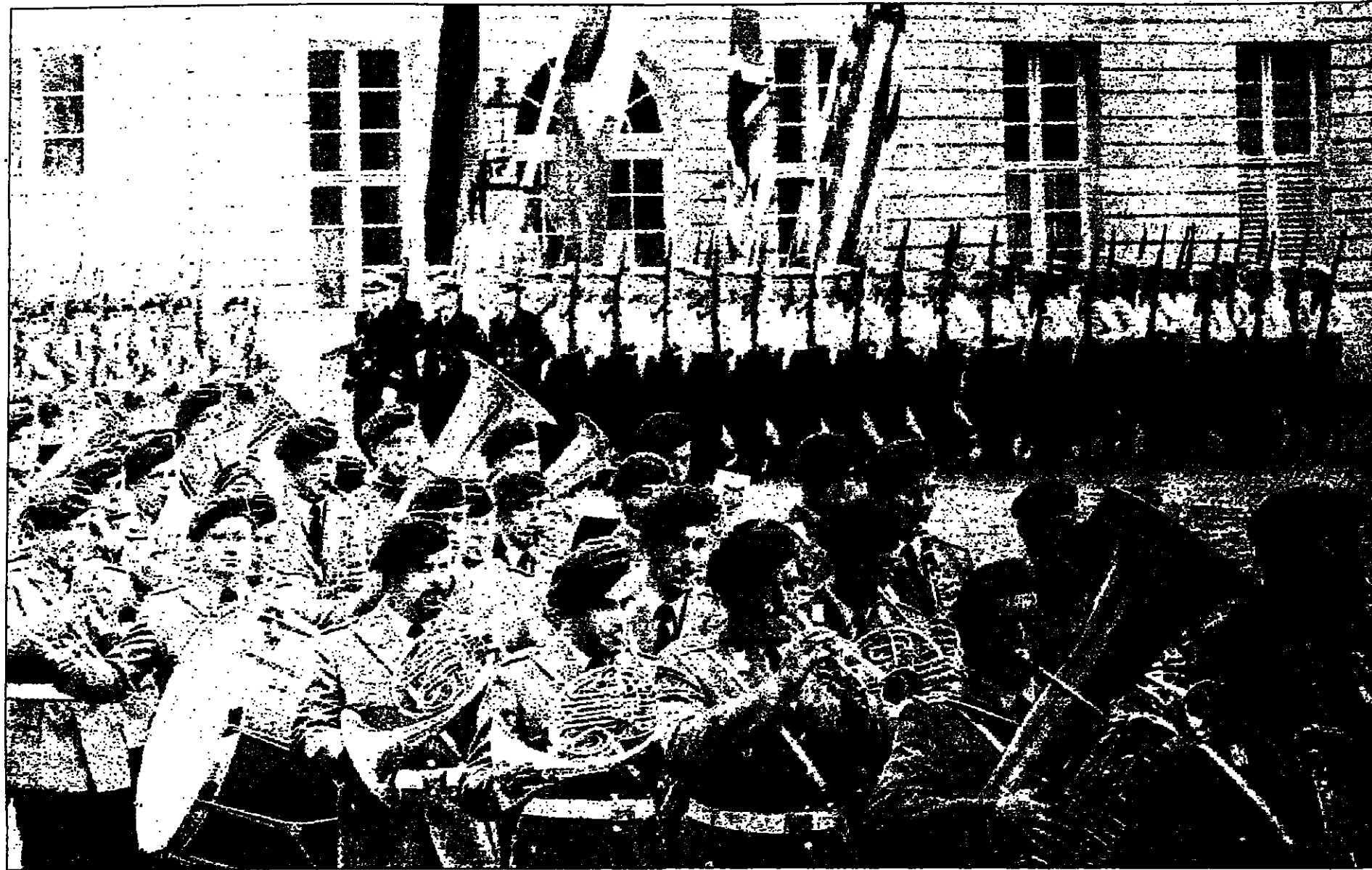
JOHN Major invited Helmut Kohl yesterday to celebrations in London marking the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in an attempt to smooth over the latest Anglo-German dispute on the future of Europe.

The arguments over a two- or multiple-speed Europe were pushed to one side as the Prime Minister and the Chancellor concentrated on improving the general climate of British-German relations. There was little time for bilateral talks, but Mr Major, in an interview with *Die Welt*, drove home his message that European union was already a weave of different coalitions and was not based solely on the Franco-German axis. "The reality is that there are various alliances within Europe," he said. "Britain maintains good, close relationships with Germany and with France."

Mr Major, in Berlin for the ceremonies for the departing British, American and French forces, went out of his way to praise Herr Kohl and to credit his role in the unification of Germany. The Prime Minister said in the Schauspielhaus, in the former East Berlin, that Allied troops had first defended freedom in the city and then offered friendship. In an attempt to soothe some of the hurt feelings of Germans over their exclusion from the summer's D-Day celebrations, the Prime Minister said he intended to invite "our partners and Allies, including your country, Chancellor Kohl, to our celebrations on May 7, 1995, to mark this (VE Day) anniversary."

Herr Kohl had seen the text well in advance, but nonetheless he looked remarkably pleased. A broad smile cracked his face. Mr Major also emphasised Britain's role in German unification. Britain and the Allies, by their presence in Berlin, showed that there was a lasting Western commitment to German unity. "We never accepted that Germany was irrevocably divided," he said.

President Mitterrand, as a head of state, took precedence over Mr Major and Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, but France was invariably mentioned last when the Chancellor listed Germany's debt to the Allies. The French President did not attend a ceremony to commemorate the 1948-49 airlift. The reason was not — French officials emphasised — his ill health but rather that France played a relatively minor part in the operation which broke the Russian stranglehold on West Berlin. Mr Major twice paid tribute during the day to the "65 servicemen and civilians who gave their lives — 25 of them my countrymen" in the airlift.



A German army brass band and honorary guard marching in the grounds of Charlottenburg Castle in Berlin during the welcoming ceremonies for Western leaders

## Cold War city salutes Western Allies for their 50-year legacy of freedom

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BERLIN

WITH a torch-lit walk through the Brandenburg Gate, John Major yesterday bid farewell to the last British soldiers in Berlin, thus closing a chapter of the Second World War and the Cold War years. Spies and black marketeers all played their part in almost 50 years of British military presence, as the troops moved from being conquerors of the Third Reich to protectors, along with the United States and France, of modern West Berlin.

The total Allied presence of about 12,000 was little more than a group of hostages, surrounded as it was by more than 300,000 Soviet soldiers. Yet they were taken seriously by both the Russians and the West. Berliners as a sign of Western resolve to keep air and land routes open to the city, stranded in the former East Germany.

Military trains travelled daily from Brunswick to Berlin throughout the Cold War; the British and other Allied officers made regular use of their right to travel in Communist East Berlin, wearing their uniform and flashing past the Trabant and Volgas in their high-powered Jeeps. But it was the battle to keep the air corridor open that

transformed the Berliners' perceptions of the Western Allies.

The Prime Minister yesterday paid tribute to the British pilots who flew hundreds of thousands of tons of food, fuel, and blankets during 1948-49 when the Russians tried to strangle West Berlin. For 462 days, American and British planes flew 277,000 flights, often defying the buzzing tactics of Soviet MiGs.

The French, initially resentful by many Berliners as not being true victors, also made their mark during the airlift. They built, with the help of 19,000 German workers, a new airport in just eight months.

Near the airport, three transmission towers broadcast East German Communist propaganda into the western half of the city. When the Soviet Union refused to stop them, the French placed dynamite beneath the towers and blew them up.

Until 1989, there was always a certain tension to serving in Berlin. British soldiers were warned about making calls on open German telephones — since East Berlin was correctly assumed to be monitoring every line — and there were strict guidelines about what

could be discussed even on scrambled telephones.

West Berlin was in fact the scene of Britain's biggest post-war intelligence effort. Britain helped America to build a tunnel under East Berlin to monitor Soviet military conversations — a project that was probably betrayed by George Blake, the spy who was stationed in the city. But even after the tunnel debacle, the British military headquarters in Hitler's Olympic stadium continued to run a major intelligence network, later

fictionalised by authors such as Len Deighton and John Le Carré.

Despite the tense atmosphere, British soldiers came to regard Berlin as a rather comfortable billet. After the war, British national servicemen found that their cigarette rations could translate into small fortunes on the Berlin black market.

Non-fraternisation rules were also quickly broken. American GIs in 1945-46 were fined \$64 (£42 today) if they were found embracing a Ger-

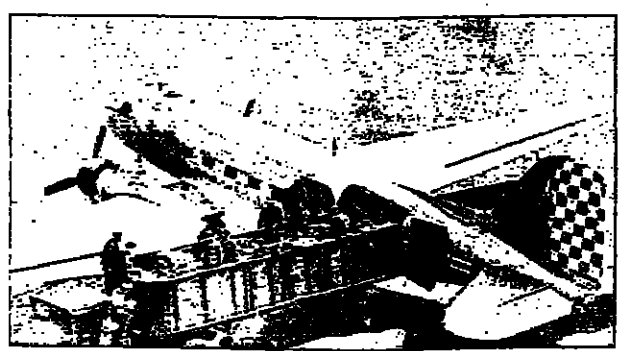
man girl. British soldiers were punished with confinement to barracks. But by the end of 1946, 2,500 GIs had applied to marry German women, and the British were not far behind.

"Berlin," according to Mai Lefers, a local journalist, "had four sectors, and each had its own erogenous zone." The British soldier tended to prow around the red-light district known as "Grotty Charlotti", in a part of otherwise respectable Charlottenburg. But army life in Berlin was usually more orderly than that.

A whole small town complex was built for the British during the 1950s and 1960s: a modern hospital whose most famous patient was Rudolf Hess, the Nazi prisoner; a Naafi shopping centre; an army hotel; green-painted buses; and flats that lined streets named after Charles Dickens and Jonathan Swift. British soldiers and their families had their own swimming pools, schools, a cinema, petrol stations, a golf course, tennis courts, and a yacht club. On the Mafeld meadow near the Olympic stadium — the statues of Aryan athletes still stand — the British played polo or cricket.

The British Officers' Club

### Berlin had four sectors, and each had its own erogenous zone



The Berlin food airlift under way in 1948

## Yeltsin leaps to rescue of Bolshoi

FROM RICHARD BEESTON  
IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin has intervened to save the Bolshoi theatre from self-destruction after infighting, poor performances and incompetent management threatened to destroy Russia's greatest cultural institution.

The emergency move could spell the end of the 30-year rule over the Bolshoi ballet of Yuri Grigorovich, the artistic director, whose iron grip has been blamed for a steady drain of the best dancers,

falling audiences and a poor repertoire.

In a presidential decree signed this week, the Kremlin has ordered that all artistic staff are to be hired on a "competitive and contractual" basis. The theatre's management will be supervised by a board, rather than one individual.

The decision appeared to be a victory for Vladimir Korokin, the Bolshoi's general director, who has been locked in a bitter feud with Mr Grigorovich, the choreographer once hailed for building up

the theatre's reputation but today condemned as the director who is destroying it.

Mr Grigorovich's many opponents in the ballet world yesterday welcomed the government intervention as a sign that the "last Stalinist" in Moscow was about to be removed from power.

"I am sure that this is the beginning of the end for Grigorovich," said Gedinimas Tarandis, once acclaimed as the Bolshoi's finest soloist until he was dismissed in February after a public clash with his boss. "There needs to

be a complete change, in ballet and in opera. At the moment it is a mafia."

The shake-up was badly needed at the Bolshoi which is going through one of the most turbulent periods of its 200-year history.

Although under communism it was hailed as one of the finest ballet companies in the world, in the past few years its standards have dropped rapidly as young talent has gone to the West, partly for more money and partly in escape of despotic management techniques.

## Lapps await diamond fever

FROM TONY SAMSTAG  
IN OSLO

AN AUSTRALIAN mining company has struck diamonds in Finnish Lapland. The find, confirmed in Norway yesterday, raises the possibility of a Klondike-style rush to exploit huge, previously unknown deposits of mineral wealth in the vast geological region known as the Baltic Shield across Arctic and sub-Arctic Europe.

The native Sami people, better known as Laplanders or Lapps, have already served notice that any large-scale



mining operations will have to take account of their historical claims to the region. Shares in Ashton Mining Ltd exploded on the Australia

stock exchange when the discovery was announced last week, rising almost 1500 per cent in a few hours. The company, formerly valued at about £30 million, is now worth almost £500 million.

The *Financial Review* newspaper in Australia reported that the find was probably one of the world's largest. Ashton said it has been working secretly in the region for eight years. Shareholders were kept in the dark about the prospecting operation, which took place under cover of a dummy subsidiary registered in The Netherlands.

## President prepares France for his death

FROM CHARLES BREMMER  
IN PARIS

SPECULATION over President Mitterrand's ability to serve to the end of his term next spring increased yesterday after he insisted that he would do so but then added that he may have only months to live.

Hours after Mitterrand attempted to reassert his waning authority in a newspaper interview, rumours about his health were stirred again by a report that he had dropped out of ceremonies in Berlin marking the departure of Western Allied troops. His office denied that he had changed his schedule.

In philosophical mood, Mitterrand, 77, used the interview in *Le Figaro* to try to quash intense rumours in the political world that he was suffering far more than officially acknowledged from the prostate cancer which has dogged him for two years. The illness, for which he was operated on a second time in July, was not hampering his duties as head of state, he said.

"I think it [cancer] will be obliging enough to allow me to complete my term. That's what I believe," the President said. "I may be wrong." However, he went on to say that he was aware that perhaps he had only months left. "I would like to write five or six books, but a book takes time and I do not have much left," he added. "I am not so greatly concerned about dying. It is not living any more that bothers me," he said.

Officials at the Elysée Palace also tried to play down the rumours which have caused politicians to rush through plans for the campaign for the presidential elections, scheduled next April, when Mitterrand reaches the end of his second seven-year term. His haggard appearance, they said, was the consequence of the draining effect of a three-month programme of chemotherapy. The President, who has spent most of the past weeks, convalescing, at his home in the Landes region, near Bordeaux, was well enough to occupy his usual table for dinner at the Brasserie Lipp on the Left Bank on Wednesday, they said.

François Giesbert, who conducted the interview last Saturday, said he found Mitterrand "good-humoured and 'fit as a fiddle' during two 45-minute strolls through the woods around his southwestern country home in Latche. Edouard Balladur, the Prime Minister, said after a Cabinet meeting with Mitterrand on Wednesday that he had found him to be in solid health."

The election's first round is due on April 23. If the President were to resign or die in office, it would be held within 35 days. The President of the Senate, the upper house of parliament, would act as interim head of state. The jitters, which have extended to the stock markets this week, are fuelled by memories of President Pompidou, who died in office in 1974 after a long and visible illness which had been repeatedly denied by his administration.

Mitterrand used the interview to remind M. Balladur, who has increasingly taken over the levers of state, that he remained in charge of France. "There cannot be two Presidents at the same time," he said. However, Mitterrand thought M. Balladur was well placed to win the presidency.

Mitterrand appeared to be drawing up a balance sheet for his long presidency. He said he hoped to go down in history as "a just President under whom there had never been abuse of the law; that my two terms were the century's most remarkable period of social and civic peace."

Closing chapter, page 18



# America calls on Muslim states to rearm Bosnians

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE United States, hopeful that it can persuade the United Nations to lift its weapons embargo against Bosnia-Herzegovina next month, is planning a multinational effort to arm the Muslims while using Nato air power to protect them from a pre-emptive Bosnian Serb offensive.

A senior Administration official, referring specifically to Muslim and rich Middle Eastern states, said: "If the arms embargo is lifted, we are prepared to give them assistance. The more countries willing to participate in this the better from our point of view."

The official, closely involved in the formulation of policy on Bosnia, said that the Administration was studying the best means of delivering the new weaponry. Briefing journalists, the official also said that it would be "many months" before Muslim forces were trained to use their new weapons effectively and that an "aggressive air campaign" to protect them from Bosnian Serb attacks during the intervening period was "probably unavoidable".

Pushing Nato deeper into the conflict that way inevitably would strain the alliance, he acknowledged, and which allies would be prepared to participate in such an air campaign was "an issue that has yet to be resolved".

However, the official argued that, with UN peacekeeping troops almost certain to be withdrawn or confined to Sarajevo before the embargo was lifted, Nato should no longer need United Nations permission to mount air strikes and should respond to Bosnian Serb attacks by destroying "higher value" targets such as supply depots and ammunition dumps. The Administration did not believe that arming the Muslims would win them the war and

the Bosnian Serbs would have little trouble seizing some of the Muslims' isolated eastern enclaves, but it would enable them "to hold on to their core territory and begin to make some gains".

The Administration's policy is being driven by intense pressure from Congress. President Clinton has agreed formally to request a lifting of the UN arms embargo within two weeks of October 15 if the Bosnian Serbs continue to reject the latest international peace plan, and unilaterally to cease to enforce it if the Security Council refuses.

The official conceded that it would now take something "nearly miraculous" to forestall that American request, but he did not agree that Russia, the Serbs' traditional ally, would automatically veto it. He suggested that Moscow could yet be persuaded to abstain if America agreed significantly to ease the trade



## Pope tells Sarajevo to strive for peace

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

THE Pope, in an address he had hoped to deliver in Sarajevo, said yesterday that the city was "a crossroads of tensions between different cultures and nations" but that its peoples are "called upon by history to live in harmony".

Speaking in Serbo-Croat during a Mass celebrated in the courtyard at his summer palace at Castel Gandolfo, he issued an impassioned appeal for reconciliation and a just peace in Bosnia and the Balkans. The Mass was broadcast live on television and radio in Sarajevo. Recalling that he is the first Slav Pope, he called for Serbs, Croats and Muslims to pardon each other in the former Yugoslavia.

"Without this outlook it is difficult to construct peace," the Pope called off his visit to Sarajevo on Tuesday after Bosnian Serbs refused to provide guarantees for the safety of the people who would have attended an outdoor Mass. The Pope begins a two-day visit to Croatia tomorrow.



People in Sarajevo Cathedral yesterday listening to a recorded address given by the Pope at Castel Gandolfo

embargo against Serbia now that President Milosevic of Serbia had imposed his own sanctions on the Bosnian Serbs.

Britain and France are also strongly opposed to lifting the arms embargo, but to preserve Nato's unity both nations would probably abstain rather than veto the US resolution. That would still leave America

## Blast in Moscow kills six

Moscow: Russian police said yesterday that they were investigating whether a huge explosion which destroyed a police building southeast of Moscow was the result of a "terrorist" attack (Richard Beeston writes).

The blast, which killed six people and injured at least 21 others, occurred in a residential neighbourhood on Wednesday night, completely destroying the police building and causing serious damage to nearby flats.

## Lead rocker

Prague: President Havel of the Czech Republic was one of 115,000 rock fans who attended a Pink Floyd concert here. Tickets cost £16, more than a tenth of the average monthly wage. (Reuters)

## Illiterate note

Vologda: Russian counterfeits misspell the name "Russia" on their faked 50,000-ruble banknotes. Authorities think the notes may have been produced in Chechnya. (Reuters)

## Cabinet quits

Sofia: Bulgaria's parliament accepted the resignation of the non-party government, making the country nearer to an early election. (Reuters)

## Rare find

Moscow: Police found 100kg of cerium, a rare metal, worth £2.6 million, at a bank. Cerium is used to remove fission products from uranium. (AP)

## Breath of life

Amsterdam: Scientists are to investigate sudden deaths among heavy smokers, who sometimes stop breathing for up to two minutes. The heart is strained when breathing resumes. (Reuters)

## Prague's English school reopens

BY MARIANNE DARCH

AN ENGLISH language school reopened in Prague this week after being closed 42 years. The English Grammar School was shut down by the Nazis in 1938 and again by the communists in 1952. Renamed the English College, the new term started with 110 boys and girls ranging in age from 13 to 18.

The renovation of the century-old school comes after three years of preparation by a London-based charitable foundation, headed by Lord Holme of Cheltenham, the Liberal Democrat peer. President Havel of the Czech Republic and the Prince of Wales are joint patrons.

"Years of repression have failed to break the Czech spirit or dampen the appetite for first-class education which we are now on the brink of providing again for the young people of the Czech Republic. The school will embody the best traditions of British and European teaching," Lord Holme said. "Within the Czech Republic there is a huge demand for the English language and a yearning for the ideals that underpin our society, although often on the world stage we underestimate these attributes."

The school opened in 1924 and staff risked their lives by working underground during the Nazi occupation after the execution of a senior teacher. A brief peacetime respite was followed by the imprisonment of numerous teachers and students by the communist regime in 1952.

Trusts, companies and individuals raised £500,000 to ensure the opening of the new school, which plans to take more than 300 pupils. More funds are being sought to create a long-term endowment to ensure the institute's future. Hubert Ward, headmaster of the King's School, Ely, for 22 years, was appointed principal in 1992, and other staff members have been drawn from the Britain and the Czech Republic.

## Communist claims he executed Mussolini

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

A FORMER Communist partisan in Italy has claimed that he killed Mussolini, and that a British officer shot Claretta Petacci, the dictator's mistress. Bruno Lonati, in a book published yesterday, says: "I was the one to kill Mussolini." The publication titled, *That April 28: Mussolini and Claretta - The Truth*, adds: "An English secret agent, codenamed John, killed Petacci, who I wanted to spare."

Signor Lonati, now 73, was political commissar of the 101st Garibaldi Brigade, a unit operating in northern Italy during the final days of Il Duce's Salò republic. Since 1981, he has claimed that he, rather than other partisans led by Walter Audisio, his rival codenamed Colonel Valerio, killed Mussolini. It is widely believed that the dictator was executed by a firing squad.

This is the first time that Signor Lonati has published

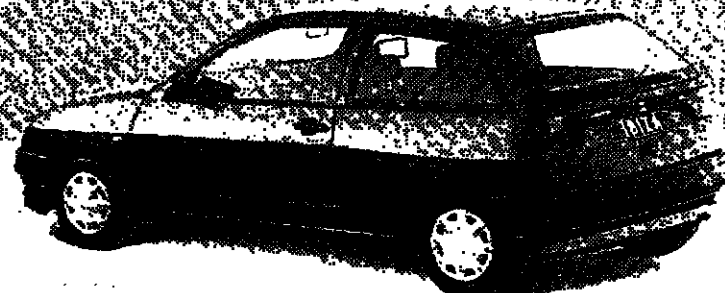
his version, and his book is attracting media attention as the 50th anniversary of Mussolini's death approaches.

Signor Lonati claims he was recruited in Milan by "Captain John", a Special Operations Executive agent. According to him, John's mission was to retrieve documents from Mussolini regarding secret contacts he allegedly had with Winston Churchill.

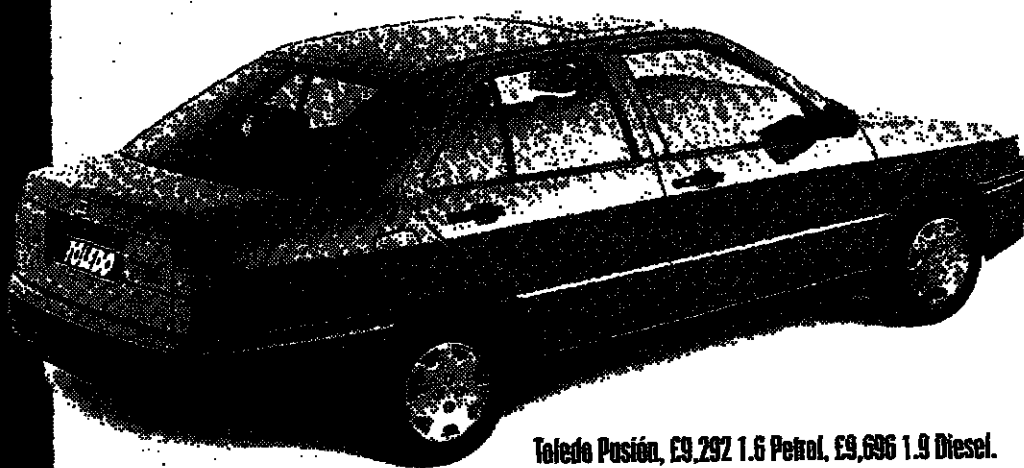
According to Signor Lonati, his rival Audisio's men moved the bodies of Mussolini and Petacci after he and "Captain John" had killed them. They were then shot again, he says. Italian historians say Signor Lonati's account is all lies. But he claims he will produce documents to back his version when archive material becomes available next year. *Il Messaggero* suggested it might have been better if he had withheld publication of his book until then.

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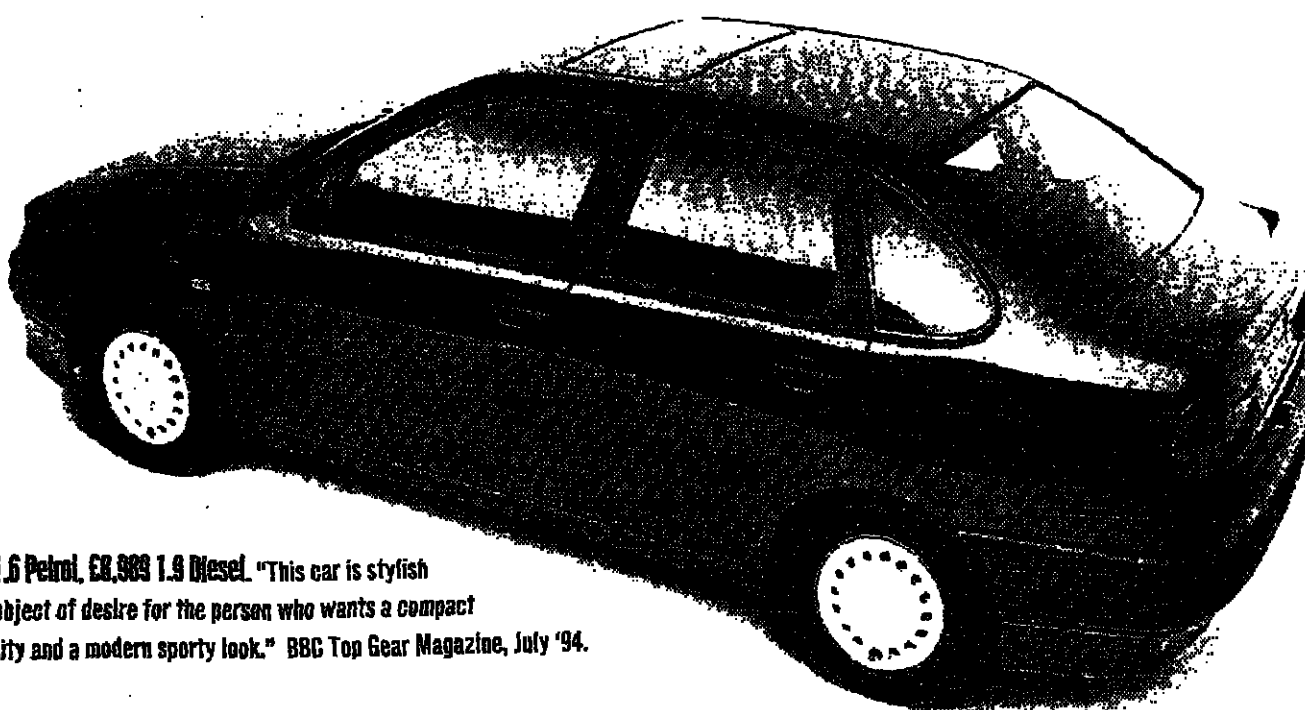
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\*Standard on the Toledo. £400 Cashback is available on all Passión vehicles registered up until 31st October 1994. Prices exclude £410 cost of delivery to dealer premises and number plates.



# Cuban Foreign Minister meets exiles in Madrid

By DAVID ADAMS AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

CUBA'S Foreign Minister is holding a series of secret, ground-breaking meetings in Madrid with leading Cuban exile groups. It is the first time in 35 years that such high-level talks have been held between the two sides, and came after persistent mediation efforts by Spain.

The talks came about after a meeting between Javier Solana, the Spanish Foreign Minister, and his Cuban counterpart, Roberto Robaina, on Wednesday. Spain, which has maintained commercial ties with Cuba, has called on President Castro to undertake key reforms to help to resolve his island's crisis.

Señor Robaina pledged that Cuba was ready to make "profound political and economic reforms", which did not undermine the "essence" of the Cuban revolution and its advances in free education and public health care.

Señor Robaina, who is regarded as one of the young pragmatists in the Cuban government, has met two exile leaders, Alfredo Duran, of the Cuban Committee for Democ-

racy, and Ramón Cernuda, of the Co-ordination Committee of Human Rights Organisations. He is also expected to meet Eloy Gutiérrez Menoyo, the leader of the Miami-based Cambio Cubano (Cuban Change), and a former revolutionary ally of Dr Castro.

"This is a very necessary and important step. I am delighted these meetings have taken place," said Wayne Smith, a member of the Cuban Committee for Democracy

after a fortnight's holiday. Mr Clinton heard appeals from his National Security advisers that he should issue an ultimatum to the junta, led by Lieutenant-General Raoul Cárdenas, that it should leave or be ousted.

The three-hour meeting produced no concrete decisions but reviewed the timetable for an invasion. The White House emphasised the importance of Mr Clinton's attendance and the fact that it was his first

the US Secretary of State, had invoked the Administration's strident rhetoric. "One way or another, the de facto government is going to be leaving," he said.

With the Haitian high command showing no sign of standing down, many felt there was no reason for America to wait. Others, including State Department advisers, argued for more time to enlist international participation. The 266 troops committed by Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Belize to follow a US force of 10,000 have started their training while Washington continues to lobby for other participants.

An invasion before November is being viewed among Mr Clinton's opponents as a ploy to improve his weak standing in advance of critical mid-term elections. Mr Clinton is said to have told colleagues that he believes an invasion before the election would be "a wash" politically. Some Democrats fear that even a trouble-free invasion might harm the President if it were perceived as a purely political act.

**One way or another, the de facto government is going to be leaving. Their days are definitely numbered**

and a former US State Department official.

Senior advisers from the State Department are putting pressure on President Clinton to set a deadline for an invasion of Haiti and to send a personal envoy to the Caribbean nation with a final demand that the military regime should step down, it emerged yesterday. In his first meeting

order of business on returning to Washington.

Questions included how to handle consultations with Congress, whether to send an emissary, whether to set the deadline, and to what extent the President should make the case for invasion personally to the American people.

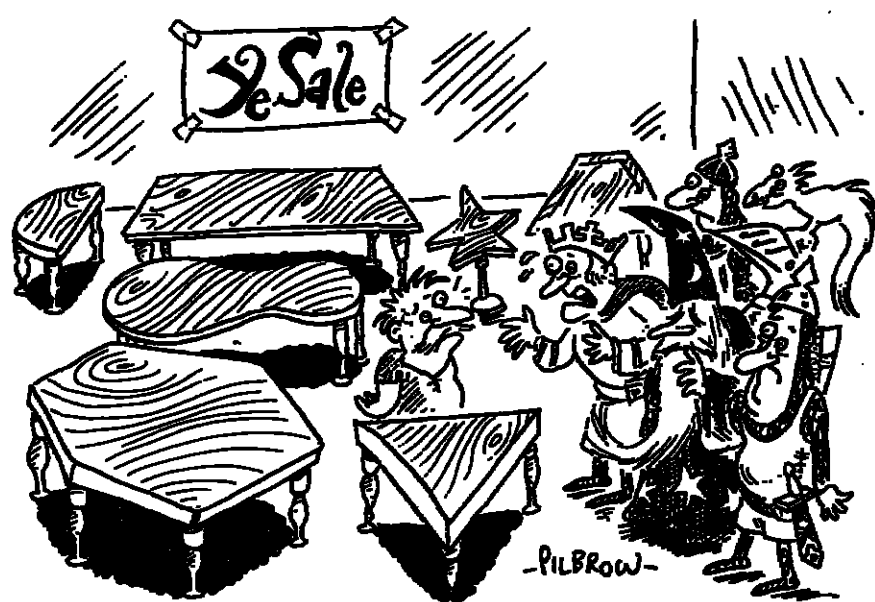
Before arriving at the White House, Warren Christopher,



Kal's view in the Baltimore Sun of the confrontation between President Clinton and President Castro

Businesses succeed by giving customers what they want at prices they want to pay.

Finally, a cash handling service with the same businesslike mentality.



"WE SORT OF HAD OUR HEARTS SET ON SOMETHING ROUND."

Girobank's business is looking after Britain's business takings. In total we process £1 in every £3 that passes through a UK till.\* We're succeeding in winning business because our business principles are the same kind that every company has to operate by. Girobank customers get precisely what they need, quickly and efficiently, at an agreed price that's hard to match. And as we all know these are the principles that keep businesses in business.

## Statements without questions, for a change

When you get a statement from Girobank there are no unpleasant surprises or hidden charges. Everything is agreed in advance and itemised on your statement, so you know exactly what you are paying, for every aspect of the service. These charges will seem surprisingly low, but as the major supplier of cash to the Post Office and many other business areas, we need vast quantities of cash every day. So we are happy to charge less to handle yours.

## Over £60 billion a year moves through Girobank

Because of the unique way we do business, our turnover has grown in leaps and bounds and our

customers include some of the most demanding companies in Britain. For instance fourteen out of Britain's top twenty retailers trust Girobank to handle their cash.

Girobank offers convenience no other bank can match, through almost 20,000 post office outlets throughout the UK including Scotland and Northern Ireland. This is the largest branch network of any UK bank, and it has the added advantage that you or your security carrier can deliver your takings 6 days a week, including Saturday mornings.

## Tailor-made, not off-the-peg

Our operation is not only big, it is also individual and finely tuned. Because every business is different we happily tailor our service accordingly. If you have varying amounts of cash to deposit or a particular mix of notes and coin, cheques and credit card vouchers, then the rates are calculated accordingly and agreed with you in advance.

## Who shares wins

You will not need to disturb your existing banking arrangements to transfer your cash handling operation to us. The service we offer is specialised and will not

impinge on any area of the general banking services where you are already well served. No disruption, no demarcation problems. Simply the best of both worlds.

## Action, not words

Cash is the life blood of our business, as it is of yours. To find out how we can help you to cut your cash handling costs and give you a better standard of service, call this number now **0800 444 241** and we'll send you an information pack right away. Then, if you'd like a quotation, we can discuss your needs over the phone or, where appropriate, send a manager to talk to you in person.

Cash Handling Service	
I would like to reduce my bank charges. Please send me an information pack. Return this coupon to Girobank plc, FREEPOST CX 1017, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 0BB or phone 0800 444 241	
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## Khmer Rouge hostage-takers run rings around Cambodian troops

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS  
IN KAMPOT, SOUTHERN CAMBODIA

FIVE miles from here, in the mountains above the Kampot river, the monsoon has turned the Khmer Rouge base of Phnom Voar (Vine Mountain) into a bog. The British, French and Australian hostages are probably still there, but even that is no longer certain. For six weeks, lies, disinformation and cruelly optimistic rumours have concealed the true gravity of the captives' plight. The

latest and most worrying report is that the guerrillas have marched them 18 miles north to a base near the small town of Kohsia. A police officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Touch Dorn, said an agent had reported that the hostages had been moved but there was no hard evidence. "Three days ago, there was intensive Khmer Rouge activity, and the hostages may have been shifted then. We will probably know the truth in a day or two." The government claims the guerrillas have tried five times to break

out of Phnom Voar with the three backpackers, who were seized on a train on July 26. This is improbable. The official assertion that the base is surrounded, sealed and short of supplies seems to be nonsense: if the Khmer Rouge decided to move its captives, it could doubtless do so. Troops seem to be thin on the ground around Vine Mountain. They are poorly armed and patently not well matched for close combat with 400 experienced guerrillas with better firearms and

intimate knowledge of the terrain. The rebels also know the location of minefields; hot pursuit is not an option for the army. Villagers near Kampot said 30 or 40 young men were kidnapped by the Khmer Rouge this week and forced to haul rice and other food, presumably to resupply Phnom Voar. They were released unharmed. In a belligerent radio broadcast, the Khmer Rouge dared the army to try to capture the base. The government issued a formal warning to foreign journalists to

stay away from Kampot, fearing that they could also become hostages or be killed. It said it would not be held accountable if anything went wrong. Diplomats from Britain, France and Australia were taken to Kampot this week in an armed convoy, but there is little for them to do except wait. Route Three, a broken road from the north to this decrepit provincial capital, was practically deserted along the final ten miles of its southernmost leg yesterday — eerie testimony to the serious security

tension since the departure of United Nations peacekeepers last year. Police said Khmer Rouge fighters were all around; distant rifle shots attested to skirmishes with government forces. An occasional soldier or policeman walks the road clutching a rifle and a small ration of bullets, presenting an absurdly easy target. There is no sign of military activity in Kampot. Unofficial army checkpoints, at which troops normally extort money or cigarettes from traffic, have disappeared: the rack-

et is evidently not worth the risk. Lieutenant-Colonel Pang Chhean, of the border police, who has been drafted into the area from other duties, said there had been intensive guerrilla activity for six successive days north of Kampot. The previous night he picked up a Khmer Rouge broadcast claiming the hostages were still at Phnom Voar. He acknowledged that it was impossible to seal Phnom Voar, and that the Khmer Rouge guerrillas were moving in and out under the noses of the army.

## Golan settlers rally against 'plateau for peace' accord

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE 13,000 Jewish settlers in the occupied Golan Heights plan a mass rally in the main town of Kitzrit tomorrow to launch a nationwide campaign to thwart what they claim is a secret government scheme to hand back the whole volcanic plateau to Syria in exchange for peace.

Loudspeaker vans were touring the 32 Golan settlements yesterday calling on the Jewish inhabitants to attend the demonstration. The anger of the Golan settlers, many of them previously supporters of the centre-left government of Yitzhak Rabin, exploded on Wednesday night when an emergency session of their organising committee was held to discuss the alleged withdrawal plan obtained from Israeli and American government sources.

According to the version leaked to the settlers, by sources they alleged included officials in the Prime Minister's office, Israel has pledged via American intermediaries to dismantle 25 of the settlements during the first three-year stage of its pullout and the remaining seven once the process is completed.

The fears of the settlers were multiplied when Israel Radio quoted official Lebanese sources as reporting new optimism about the peace process after a Washington commitment that Israel would leave the Golan — occupied since 1967 — within four years. Peace with Egypt was

achieved in a similar staged fashion in 1979 with an Israeli pullback to an interim line in the occupied Sinai accompanied by an immediate normalisation of relations.

In an attempt to defuse the new tension, senior government officials yesterday repeatedly denied that Israel had privately committed itself to the total pullback, which Syria insists is the vital ingredient of any deal. Mr Rabin told a Cabinet session in Tel Aviv that during the first three-year interim stage contained in Israel's latest peace proposal, no settlements would be removed from the 3,280 ft-high plateau overlooking the Lake of Tiberias. He claimed that the final pullout line would be decided only after the initial period.

The settlers, who have raised funds at home and

abroad for their campaign, remained unconvinced. Citing sources in Mr Rabin's office and the Israeli military — many of whose top officers are opposed to a total evacuation of the Golan — Eli Malka, the settlers' leader, insisted that the Prime Minister had committed himself to full withdrawal.

"The Americans delivered this to the Syrians, including details on complete withdrawal from the Golan and evacuation of all the settlements," he told Israel Radio. The Golan Settlers' Committee claimed that negotiations between Israel and Syria were at an advanced stage and that a breakthrough was expected soon. Uri Heimer, the committee spokesman, issued a warning: "We intend to take harsh but non-violent measures in the coming days that will shake the government and the Israeli public."

Debbie Atoun, a resident of the Golan Agricultural Settlement of Keshet, claimed that Mr Rabin was reneging on a pledge, given only ten days before the election which swept him to power, not to abandon the whole of the Golan to the Syrians. Mr Rabin has pledged a nationwide referendum before any complete Golan withdrawal. Israeli politicians were speculating last night that he might call an early election on the issue before the final date for the next poll in 1996.



Iraqi children from the Shuaiba district, about 50 miles from the port of Basra, punting their boats through a marsh canal earlier this year

## CIA says Saddam wrecked Marsh Arab region

FROM TOM RHODES  
IN WASHINGTON

THE systematic draining of the southern Iraqi marshes by President Saddam Hussein has driven more than 100,000 Shia Muslims from their homes and produced an environmental disaster "of epic proportions", according to a report by the CIA. The agency has shown that Saddam's campaign to drain and divert water, combined with burning

vegetation and homes, has transformed the rich wetlands into desert and successfully disabled any opposition to his regime from the south.

More than three years after a failed uprising, in which tens of thousands of Shia Muslims heeded President Bush's call to arms after the end of the Gulf War, the report says that their haven, which has shielded opponents of regimes for centuries, has been destroyed. "For more than a millennium, the wetlands near the confluence

of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers have supported a unique way of life for permanent marsh-dwellers and provided shelter for Bedouin and opponents of central authorities in Baghdad," the report states.

The CIA says a primary reason for the drainage was to disable the Shias. It was these rebels who, in March 1991, attacked garrisons and opened prisons in readiness for even a semblance of Western help that has never materialised. A United Nations reso-

lution approved shortly after Iraqi troops were expelled from Kuwait forbids Saddam from oppressing the Shias, and allied nations continue to patrol a "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq to prevent air attacks.

Nevertheless, the CIA report demonstrates, the patrols have merely induced a prolonged ground offensive against the Shias. The study shows that the region has dried out because of a new east-west dam and a canal to the north of al-Amarah marsh.

## Faint radio signal revives hope for missing seamen

BY MARIANNE DARCH

TWENTY-four crew members who abandoned a sinking ship in the South Atlantic six days ago may still be alive in lifeboats. Weak radio signals transmitted at five-minute intervals have revived hopes for the men, whom rescuers feared had been lost.

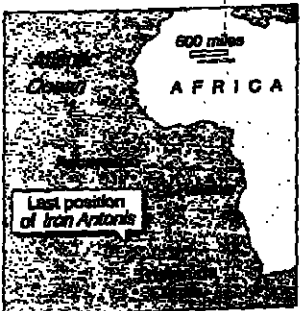
An RAF Hercules has joined the search for the crew of the Cyprus-registered ore carrier *Iron Antonis*, after an aircraft picked up faint radio signals. The master of the *Iron Antonis* sent out a message last Saturday saying the ship had a crack in her starboard side and was taking in water. The seamen — three Greek officers and 21 Filipino crew — abandoned ship between the islands of Tristan da Cunha and St Helena. They are believed to be in two lifeboats. One has a motor and could be towing the other. They are thought to have an emergency high-frequency radio which could transmit for assistance. The first faint signals were heard by the

crew of an RAF TriStar yesterday afternoon, but they were unable to get an exact fix on the location of the signal. Two Royal Navy ships are to join the search.

The 48,756-tonne *Iron Antonis* was on her way from Brazil to China when she started sinking. A merchant ship, the *Clipper Santos*, later sailed past the last recorded position, but found only a small oil slick and some debris. Rescue operations were launched by the Rio de Janeiro rescue co-ordination centre, and Brazilian Hercules are using the Royal Air Force station on Ascension Island as a base. The RAF Hercules aiding the search was diverted en route to the Falklands.

On Tuesday, South African research and rescue co-ordinators said their chances of finding the crew alive were slim. However, they may have had time in the two hours before she sank to equip both lifeboats with equipment, food, water and a radio and improve their chances of survival in one of the world's most inhospitable oceans.

Weather conditions are not an immediate problem, but the length of time the men have been adrift is adding to concern for their welfare. The RAF rescue co-ordination centre plotted the likely drift of the lifeboats but the search area could still involve 24,000 square miles of open sea.



## Chalker calls for compromise by Cairo delegates

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN CAIRO

BARONESS Chalker of Wallasey, the Overseas Development Minister, warned the Cairo population conference yesterday not to waste time on trying to cross divides that could not be bridged.

Without mentioning by name the Vatican and its hard core of ten supporting nations, she urged those who were unable to accept compromise wording on contentious passages, especially abortion, to enter their reservations immediately. "This would surely be better than seeking to undermine the majority view and creating a time-wasting deadlock," she told delegates.

"Our time is not only precious, but very, very costly." Her remarks were applauded warmly by most of the 170 nations here, many of which are now openly hostile to the Vatican and what they see as the disproportionate influence the Holy See has had on discussions. They also have begun to ask why one religion should have representative status at this conference whereas Islam, Buddhism and other religions do not.

The European Union agreed yesterday its position on abortion with the four aspirant EU members and nine delegations from Eastern Europe, including Russia. The vexed question has now been left to a working party and informal consultation. Lady Chalker made clear that Britain and other Western countries were ready to continue negotiating throughout the weekend and until 2am each day to prevent a breakdown. She also said it was important to move on to the implementation of the Cairo proposals and to agree on the financing. She told the conference that the Overseas Development Administration would make £100 million available over two years for population and family plan-

ning and emphasised later that none of this money would be taken from allied programmes such as help for female literacy. Instead, the money would come from reduced spending on large infrastructure projects, to which developing countries themselves now gave lower priority.

The draft declaration speaks of raising \$17 billion (£11 billion) to pay for a 20-year global population programme. At issue has been not only the overall total, which developing countries say is too low, but the proportion paid by the rich donor nations, now a quarter. The Group of 77 developing countries wants that proportion to rise to a third. Lady Chalker said there was far more realism on all sides about resources than there had been at the Rio de Janeiro environment conference. Western nations have been heartened by the broad support from the Muslim countries represented in Cairo, especially Iran, whose delegate, a mullah, threw his country's weight behind the Cairo proposals.

However, there is worry that some Muslim countries insist on adding phrases such as "within the laws and customs of each country" after some contentious paragraphs. Nicolaas Bieggman, the Dutch chairman of the main plenary session, who has been at the heart of most proposed compromises, admitted yesterday that such a phrase could undermine the force of the draft's recommendations. Lady Chalker said such phrases appeared to condone customs such as female circumcision, adding that education was the key to eliminating them. "There is nothing the United Nations can do to force a change."



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Women were asked to portray their mothers in photographs and words. Gillian Bowditch judges the effect

## Images of mother country

As is the mother, so is her daughter," said the prophet Ezekiel, and women have struggled to prove him wrong ever since. It is the most intense of relationships, potentially the most nurturing, frequently the most destructive, often the most guilt-ridden, and always the least straightforward in any woman's life.

Now a new exhibition, *Portrait of My Mother*, which opens in Edinburgh today exposes the raw emotion behind the mother-daughter relationship. Sixty-five of the world's most famous women photographers have snapped and written about their mothers in an intensely personal show.

"My mother always said: 'Keep your feet on the ground and your legs crossed,'" writes Rosalind Solomon alongside a photograph of a smiling woman with a cloth hat and a direct gaze. Ms Solomon's mother looks as if she could make a decent apple pie, bandage a cut finger and keep a fractious child distracted for an hour or two. Unlike Deborah Hammond's mother, sitting naked, eyes closed, holding a pair of opera glasses in one hand. The other hand is caught in a rope noose. Ms Hammond's mother looks as though she eats babies for breakfast. The text does nothing to alleviate these disturbing feelings.

"I remember lying in the darkness of my bedroom listening to the sounds of the house, and my mother moving quietly and deliberately through all the rooms. I could imagine her gently touching each object along her path, so like a caress. The door to my bedroom was ajar. My skin was ready. Soon it would be my turn to feel the hand of my mother."

It is easy to believe Viviane Esders, the curator of this sometimes spooky, often moving exhibition, when she says the show represents two years of hard work in which she has often had to play the role of therapist. She had hoped to display the work of 85 photographers, but many said they simply could not photograph their mother, the subject being too intense, too emotional and too autobiographical.

"Many women found it very difficult to photograph their mothers as old women. They could not face up to the ageing process, so they have used photographs of their mothers as young women, and sometimes even as children," she says.

The ensuing collection shows young beautiful mothers, old frail mothers, naked mothers, surreal mothers, mothers who cannot be separated from their daughters, angry mothers, and mothers with faces blotted out or disappearing into the landscape.

Mrs Esders says the photographers range in age from 30 to 80, and fall into three categories. The youngest are more likely to have good relationships with their mothers. Those in the 45 to 60 age group, including Mrs Esders herself, tend to have bad relationships with their mothers, while for the over-sixties the mother-daughter relationship is distant and less emotionally intense.

"A woman photographer may be able to achieve a near objectivity when working with an anonymous model. With her own mother, everything changes. A new relationship is established and a kind of self-revelatory portrait is produced which often unveils the generation gap and tangled emotions," Mrs Esders says. But if the pictures were difficult to take, writing the text was harder.

"My mother did not want my father. My mother did not want any children. But she got it all and could not stomach it. No desire, no joy," writes Claude Alexandre of her mother, a brittle-looking woman in dark glasses and a fake leopardskin coat.

Hello mother! It's too late now but I always wanted to ask you, "Who are you?" writes Ernestine Ruben of her portrait. It is a theme which is repeated throughout the exhibition. The women whose mothers died when they were children cling to their memories, expressing a wistfulness and a sorrow that they never knew them.

"The picture I am holding in my left hand is an identity picture of my mother in the 1950s. My hand protects her memory," writes Anne Garde.

Mrs Esders got the idea for the exhibition, which is part of the International Festival of Women Photographers, after assembling *In Search of My Father*, an exhibition of male photographers' portraits of their fathers. That, she says, was much more straightforward. The men tended to take pictures of their fathers watching television or playing with the dog.

By contrast there is hardly a photograph or text in the current exhibition



Mothers dearest: Anne Garde (above) holds an ID photo; Ms Hammond's mother (inset) poses with noose

which does not reflect conflicting emotion. Rosella Belluschi, who has whitened out the face of her mother, writes that she believes if she took a direct portrait, her mother would die.

Beside a deeply disturbing photograph of a skeletal young woman with a broken dummy's head, Alice Odillon blames her mother for her own anorexia. Françoise Janicot, who photographed a drawing of her mother, says: "My mother had an untouchable presence. I can't photograph her."

Mario Brockmann tells of how, when making the portrait of her mother,

### Photographers found the subject too emotionally tense

she dreamt her mother had died. But while few of the portraits on display are unambiguous, there is also much tenderness.

One of the most moving photographs is Aliza Auerbach's portrait of her sick

mother's hands clasping the fingers of a baby. Alongside it she has written: "I remember my mother toweeling me after a bath, taking particular care of my thin fingers, separating them with a gentle touch. Now, here I am, giving my frail old mother a bath, drying her as gently as I can, for she is so vulnerable, her body so breakable, her skin so transparent."

• "Portrait of My Mother" runs from Sept 9-Oct 8 at the Institut Français d'Ecosse, 13 Randolph Crescent, Edinburgh, and from Oct 14-Nov 19 at the Institut Français du Royaume Uni, 17 Queensberry Place, London.

## Top gun is just a damp squib

When stars give long interviews, the magic is lost for their fans

HE HAS resisted for years, but now for the first time, the actor Tom Cruise has opened up about his relationship with his father, his wife Nicole Kidman, and his adopted baby daughter, Isabella. And like hundreds of stars before him, he has chosen the vehicle of the in-depth interview with *Vanity Fair*, confessional to Hollywood's alumni.

The package is clearly seductive: an attentive interviewer who is prepared to spend months listening and, in Cruise's case, risking near death allowing Cruise to show off in a tiny biplane ("I'm just going to roll over and do a kind of 350-degree somersault in the air. Can you handle that?"). "Sure," said the interviewer, feeling "not sure at all"; flatterer photographs by the top American photographer, Annie Leibovitz; simply acres of space to indulge in airing your views; and for all I know, the chance to check the copy afterwards.

But he shouldn't have done it — and I speak as a Cruise fan. My heart fluttered at his performance in *Top Gun*. My head admired his wheelchair-bound American veteran in *Born on the Fourth of July*. His acting is to die for. He is worth every cent of the 15 to 20 million dollars a movie that he commands.

Sadly though, I will find it difficult to remain in his fan club, or rush to see his latest film, the soon to be released *Interview with the Vampire*. The spell has been broken, the veil drawn aside. As Groucho Marx once said of returning to an old flame, "a cigar rellit is never the same."

What the interview reveals, for all that it is dressed up to show the "dark forces which drive him", is the crashing mundanity of Cruise. Here he is on his adopted baby Isabella, talking in the way that new fathers have — at once bragging and complaining: "I remember when I used to go out and party all night and sleep in till noon or one o'clock. Now 9.30am seems decadent." He was, he says, scared to death at changing his daughter's nappies. But the joys of parenthood are such that sometimes he stops and thinks: "I want to make sure I'll remember this for ever."

WHY DID he and Nicole Kidman embrace parenthood? "We talked about children from time to time, but there was always the work. But then we went, 'When is it ever going to be the right time?'" Here he is on his love for Nicole: "She is a person who understands. It was as if a whole new life had started for me."

And now on his late father. With tears welling, he says: "You know, I loved my father very much. I think sometimes what it would have been like for him to see me with my daughter. And finally, 'When I look at Isabella, I realise that there is no possible way that a parent can't love their child.' I don't blame him for his boring life. Just because he is a dream on celluloid, why should anything else he says be of great interest? But I do blame him for spoiling my dreams. He should have resisted the blandishments of his agents and his vanity. An entire industry is devoted to getting film stars to spill the beans, but what boring beans they are. Fantasy should be what film stars are made of, the less we fans know, the better."



RACHEL KELLY

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**AT NEWSAGENTS • FRIDAY**

## The unusual world of Peter Carey

Joanna Pitman meets the Australian author to find that his art imitates his restless personality



Carey's heights thrill him: "I always felt I'd be happy forever if I got a book published"

If you have read *Oscar and Lucinda*, the 1988 Booker Prize-winning novel by Peter Carey, or his new book, *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*, you will be equipped to sketch for yourself an outline of the personality of this delightful writer. When you are face to face with the creative animal, it becomes clear that the inimitable style mirrors the man.

Just as the prose vaults effortlessly across vast geographical and temporal spaces, gathering kaleidoscopic colours to clothe the rum coves of his tales, so the writer is a roaming inventor possessed of a ferociously active mind and a lifestyle untrammelled by convention.

Carey is in London for a week, steeling himself for the tedium of promotion, launch, prattle and parties. Like the prose, the man appears incapable of sitting still for long. Looking unjustly diminished on a yawning sofa, he fidgets with the cushions and all the while his conversation scampers along.

"I have always imagined worlds ever since I was small. I like to think that my books invent new worlds like the kind of thing you see if you put your head down between your legs and look at the world upside down. It seems sharpened and clear, yet also strange."

The *Unusual Life of Tristan Smith* is his sixth book, published in this country to considerable acclaim. Yet, in spite of being lionised as one of the greats of the Booker pantheon, Carey is still surprisingly timid and insecure about his image. He looks the part of the tormented thinker, who has faced deep problems and not yet found the salve of peace. At 51, his face and form are spare, his chin cleft and bony and his

boyish uniform of jeans and Doc Martens hangs on long white limbs that protrude stick-like between rumpled sock and trouser turnup.

It's very hard for an Australian writer to be published in London. When I was young and just starting out, it never occurred to me that I would meet a real writer, let alone become one. He has travelled far since the day his teacher wrote in a school report: "Must be careful not to become a narrow-minded scientist."

Carey's furtive powers of invention took root early on. "I was alienated as a working-class misfit in a school for kids

of wealthy families. I think I began then to invent situations for myself that allowed me to fit in more easily with these surroundings."

After school and an ill-starred university year of science, he joined an advertising agency. Seduced by the thrills of colleagues aspiring to be poets and painters, he announced he would write a novel forthwith. "In just one year, Joyce, Kafka, Beckett and the American Beats came flooding into my life. I had the conceit to claim that I too would write something. My ignorance was a great boon. I had no idea I was putting myself in the same league as Proust. But after dinner every

evening I would sit down and write the novel. I enjoyed it straight away. I still remember the early pleasures of language. From then on, writing became the single most important thing for me."

From these stumbling beginnings, Carey embraced a joy for words and the capacity to luxuriate in the precision of language. "My first novel was published only in part much later but I still remember the sentences I really worked hard on."

Back in Australia two years later in 1980 he got his first book published, the short-story collection *The Fat Man in History*. "I always felt I would be happy forever if I got

a book published, over the moon if I got a review and I'd die if I got a good review. I was lucky. I got good reviews."

The acclaim fired him to greater literary efforts and fuelled his "paddock jumping" tendencies — his impulse to move endlessly on. His first marriage had broken down, he lived with an English painter, among hippies in Queensland, started on his first successful novel, *Illywhacker*, moved to Sydney, married again and so his life went on, leaping and dancing from one venue, one book and one wife to another.

Now he lives in New York, has an Australian wife, two children and six books to his name. "I have done things I'm proud of but there's nothing to compare with my books." He is already on to his next novel about comics and rejection, a notion he has looked at long and hard.

Writing is a joyous compulsion but also an intensely self-conscious act. Like most writers, Carey is unable or unwilling to stave off the dreaded self-referential tendency. Several years ago he published what seemed to be a quasi-and easily intimidated British audience, a hideously gushing and self-indulgent account of his love for his wife and the drama of their son's birth. The splendour of his artistic gifts was not in question. It was the more telling notion of taste and restraint.

But as Carey points out, the uninhibited transience of his own life, his abandonment and alienation, mirror those of his own, brash country. "Australia is still in deep denial about its history," he says. One might say the same about its most famous living literary son.



The furore over photographs of the Prince of Wales wearing nothing but a towel has put a very private matter into public focus

# Nudity is never more than skin deep

If there is nothing new under the sun, there is still less below the belt: emerging from the shower, very few of us have any real surprises for the world. So there must be considerable head-scratching right now among those editors who would love to find a public interest to be served by selling us long-lens pictures of the Prince of Wales in his birthday suit.

If anyone had had the forethought to start a rumour weeks ago — say, that the Heir had a collection of intimate and treasonable tattoos, or a birthmark proving that he is the lost Tsarina Anastasia preserved by cryogenics in a secret Libyan bunker — they might just argue that the public had a right to full and frank pictorial reassurance. To prevent civil disorder and a run on the pound, you understand. As it is, all *Bild* and *Paris-Match* can offer is a man with no clothes on and a justifiable, massive cause for complaint. God speed his lawsuits.

The real public interest of the affair has nothing to do with the Prince. It lies in the wonderful German text poured around the pictures, and amplified by the statements of *Bild*'s deputy editor Paul Martin. It crystallises a very modern approach to physical privacy: an attitude women have grown resignedly used to, but which is now, for the first time, applied to a man.

The idea we are being fed is that if you have a fine body you ought to be pleased — grateful, indeed — to show it off. That the body is not the seat of your individuality and the sacred temple of the spirit, but merely a desecrated, to be thrown open to the public, a bit like flaunting your lobelias for the National Garden Scheme. Modesty, the argument goes, is for ugly people. They have a duty to hide

away, while the beautiful must flaunt their beauty. Not can: must.

It is not surprising that this attitude should break cover and go unisex in Germany. The Germans always had an unsettling streak of male exhibitionism. Ask any shell-shocked English public schoolboy on an exchange visit. You only have to see the brown bodies jogging from one beach weighing-machine to the next on Gran Canaria, or fleeing their lats on the Baltic naturist beaches, to know that the magazine's line will meet some sympathy among German men. For *Bild* pleads that this is a healthy feature: that the Prince is an example to



LIBBY PURVES

all. "As firm and smooth as a Greek statue", gushed the piece, "strong shoulders, trained upper arms, a manly hairy chest. Not one gram too much, not one too little... a kingly figure". Herr Martin, on television, pulled in his own stomach into doubt flabbing out a bit, as newspapermen will) and spoke rapturously of Michelangelo's David and royal beauty, before presumably being led away for a cold shower and an hour on the p.d.-deck.

Women, as I say, have grown resigned to this attitude that the body is just another accessory. When the Princess of Wales was photographed in the gym and bit back, the editors wailed "But she

looked fantastic". And so she did: but she still didn't want to be on show. The same has been done to her repeatedly, ever since the see-through skirt and the pregnant bikini shots: always with the cry: "But she shouldn't mind! She looks great!"

When Jacqueline Onassis was 50, paparazzi pictures showed her topless, looking superb, and were published with the same sort of health sermon as *Bild* served up. She was, reportedly, shattered. Beautiful or not, it was still her body, and private. Women do feel this, more often than admiring men suppose. Maybe now such men, wincing along with the Prince of Wales, will start to see the point.

Modesty is a strange thing: it has remarkably little to do with the state of

the body, and everything to do with a state of mind. Contexts which allow nudity do so only under the full control of the nude: ask strippers, artists' models and pin-up girls and they will admit to sharing the common nightmare about being suddenly naked in the street. Even naturists often hate cameras, feeling that they breach some psychological privacy barrier.

The desire to be covered is deep, unpredictable, personal and quite unconnected to beauty. Go to any public baths and you will find that some women hide their flat stomachs in the awkward changing cubicles, while others cheerfully expose flab and stretch-marks in the open changing. On the beach, lovely teenage bodies lurk in baggy T-shirts while stout matrons go topless and beargrass take the air. Nobody has a right to criticise either extreme, whether to demand that the ugly be covered, or to poke a lens up someone else's T-shirt. Nudity is all in the mind.

## The man who pipes up for Blair

Alastair Campbell on his new job as the Labour leader's mouthpiece, his undying support for Burnley FC — and the problem of playing the pipes when sober

Greater love hath no man, says Sir Bernard Ingham, than that he lay down his paper and pen for a politician. Alastair Campbell, *Today's* political editor, and columnist, who is to be Tony Blair's press secretary, survived his first blood test this week by facing Jeremy Paxman's most sceptical smirk.

He was all set to do the papers (at 4.30am yesterday) but someone at the BBC decreed: no more Campbell on papers, or *The Week in Westminster*, and goodbye to his late-night discussions on Radio 5. He is now a propagandist in the Bernard Ingham mould (though more photogenic) and he doesn't mind it a bit.

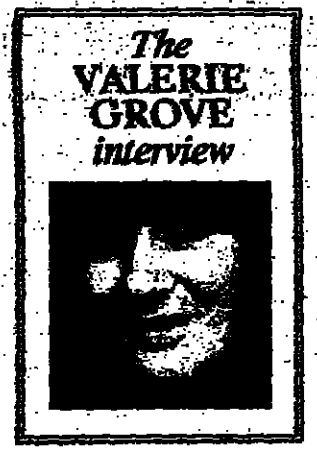
He is also happy to be the piper playing someone else's tune because Campbell actually does play the bagpipes — his Scottish father taught him — and once his piping did him a big favour.

He had just started working at the *Daily Mirror* as a reporter but, unlikely as it seems, would sometimes cross the Channel and do a bit of busking. "The French are much nicer to buskers than the British," he says, "and they like pipe music." One summer he and his girlfriend, Fiona Millar, then an *Express* reporter, went down to Nice but Fiona refused to hand round the hat in case she ran into her editor, Larry Lamb, on holiday. So he busked alone, and was piping sonorously at a restaurant in Villefranche when suddenly he was handed ten francs and a voice said: "Aren't we paying you enough then?" It was Mike Molloy, the *Mirror* editor.

They spent the rest of the holiday with the Molloyes, a good professional move for a young reporter.

We met at his sunny Hampstead house yesterday morning when he got back from taking his two boys to Gospel Oak School (in theory of his column is that Princes William and Harry should be sent to a state school instead of huddling between grouse moors and theme parks).

Fiona — who writes the very good political profiles in *Parliament's House* magazine, and co-wrote with Glenys Kinnock a Virago book about women of the Left — was feeding their new baby, Grace, before going off swimming. The telephone rang constantly with congratulations, one from the film director Hugh Hudson (of *Kinno* — *The Movie*, for which Campbell did the interviewing).



The VALERIE GROVE interview

Campbell and Millar form part of a new, smart, middle-class and electable Labour coterie. The Tories have long enjoyed the patronage of such coteries, and Campbell is ready to extend these services to Blair, having been as close as spoons with the Kinnocks. He hit it off with Kinnock.

Campbell's father (Hebridean-born and Gaelic speaking) is a vet who practised in Keighley, West Yorkshire, until, after an unfortunate encounter with an angry sow, moved to Leicester. Campbell went to City of Leicester comprehensive (three years ahead of Gary Lineker), where he was known as Jock because of the bagpipes.

He thinks he wasted his first two years at Caius College, Cambridge, by hard drinking and excessive dedication to football. "I wasn't exactly a hooligan but I was what the Italians call a *figaro*." But in his third year he swanned off to Nice to teach and came back to get a 2:1 in modern languages.



His master's voice — Alastair Campbell does not mind being called a propagandist. "I have time for frankly biased journalism," he says

He stopped drinking at the end of a disastrous period on Eddy Shah's *Today*, when he was news editor of the short-lived Sunday paper. "It was a bad time, and it ended very badly. On the advice of every one I gave up drinking for six months, and came to the conclusion that this was a much better way of living. I am not in any sense evangelical about it, but I don't miss it at all. I can get drunk on atmosphere."

He still plays the pipes when invited. "But honestly it was more fun when I drank. People usually want you to play when they're having more fun than you are." Seeing their cosy domestic scene I wonder why he and Fiona have not married after 15 years together and three children. "Because I don't want to get married," says Fiona. But Campbell says he wouldn't rule it out. Is he a feminist? He hummed and

hahed, so I asked Fiona. She said he was good with the kids, but ask him if he knows how to switch on the dishwasher... or where the dishwasher is". His mother-in-law Audrey, a straight-talking Yorkshire woman from Hull who has come to live with them said firmly: "He's not a feminist."

Fiona's father and Audrey's husband was Bob Millar, of the *Daily Express*, who died in June. Campbell devoted his column to a lament for his late father-in-law, "a lifelong Socialist and political to his dying breath". Kinnock had been one of his last visitors in hospital: they had shared a hero in Nye Bevan. "Even in Beaverbrook's time he showed you could be a Socialist and write for a right-wing newspaper and never write a word you don't believe in."

The story always told about Campbell is how he socked *The Guardian's* Michael White on the jaw on the day Robert Maxwell went missing, for making an anti-Maxwell joke. "Oh, that Maxwell lick-spittle stuff," says Campbell. It was such a fraught scene: Mike kept repeating his joke: "now we know why he's called Captain Bob-bob-bob-bob". Eventually I saw a blue mist and lashed out. "White socked him back, harder. 'I'm still extremely fond of Mike. I did apologise within the hour.'"

He first met Tony Blair in the lobby and found him open, funny, engaging, friendly, clever, ambitious and absolutely sure about what Labour should be about. But isn't it going to be hard to be the poacher turned gamekeeper? "I think it would be, if I had ever projected myself as being independent. But Tony Bevin once described me as a brilliant propagandist and I don't

deny it. I have much more time for frankly biased journalism than for people who just pretend they are reporting objectively. The Tory campaign in the last election was so clever: they led on this question of trust. Now it's the Tories who have lost trust, even of their own supporters."

"But despite all the betrayals and broken promises and the feeling of fed-upness and sleaze, Labour's got to worry a lot less about the Tory record and a lot more about Labour's message and what Labour hopes to do. There must be no complacency and no relaxing, even though we're 30 points ahead."

"It would be absolutely presumptuous of me to assume I'm going to do Bernard Ingham's job. But if I can do for Tony in opposition what Bernard did for Maggie in office, I would do pretty well. What Bernard had going for him was something to sell — people knew what Thatcher was about and she knew what she was about — which I don't think Gus O'Donnell or Chris Mayer have had. I always got on with Bernard even though I was personally hostile to Thatcher. He's a Burnley fan as well."

"Now, for all the Tory attempts to show Tony as a waffer, which frankly don't stick, I think Tony is somebody who equally speaks directly and knows what he stands for. The important job between now and the election is to make people see the connection between politics and their own lives. That's why it's important to go to football, see your parents in Yorkshire, and have people like Audrey around who will tell you straight. 'They wouldn't stand for that in Wigan.'"

I want to do for Tony what Ingham did for Maggie

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# The Queen can reclaim high ground

Openness is the best policy for the monarchy, John Grigg says

The Queen is wise to have agreed to opening the costs of running the royal palaces to public scrutiny. Failure in the past to be candid with Parliament about royal expenditure has, in the recent irreverent climate, caused a lot of unpleasantness which could, and should, have been avoided.

In 1971, I suggested to one of the Queen's most senior advisers that complete disclosure, on her own initiative, to the select committee then sitting would be an act of imagination from which she would gain much credit. It was obviously wrong that public financing of the monarchy should include both direct grant (the Civil List) and tax immunities, without the effect of the latter being taken into account when the scale of the former was under consideration. Unfortunately, my suggestion fell on stony ground, and the Conservative majority on the committee acquiesced in the Palace's policy of secrecy.

Over the years the Queen's Prime Ministers have served her very badly in this respect. It was up to them, rather than to an obscure individual, to advise her to anticipate the trouble that was sure to come one day. But they preferred not to raise such an awkward topic during their cosy weekly audiences, if indeed it ever occurred to them to do so. Labour Prime Ministers — to judge from their public utterances — were, if anything, even more sycophantic than Tories.

If the basic anomaly had been removed, and a policy of openness volunteered, when all was going well for the Queen and she was under no pressure, she might never have suffered the indignity of seeming to be forced to pay tax, or of continuing to be on the defensive about her finances, even now. But her latest concession may be the end of an unseemly retreat. It is accompanied by positive steps on her part to regain the high ground.

Only puritans and old-fashioned Socialists want a cut-price monarchy, shorn of its beauty and magnificence. Those who now call for a "reduced" monarchy are taking a pathetically blinkered view of one of the world's great institutions. Alone among secular monarchies — the papacy being the only comparable instance — the British monarchy has worldwide status and appeal. It does not belong to the United Kingdom alone, though the UK benefits enormously from its universal prestige.

The Queen's present critics, most of whom were prudently silent until the past few years, tend to criticise without understanding and, above all, without imagination. They would like to assimilate our monarchy to that of, say, Sweden. But even if the Swedish monarchy were as boring and humdrum as they think, it would, anyway, be a wholly unsuitable model for ours, because of the vast difference in scale. The United Kingdom alone is much larger (in popu-

lation) than Sweden, but quite apart from that it is by no means the only country of which the Queen is sovereign, and there is no Swedish Commonwealth embracing vast numbers of people in every continent.

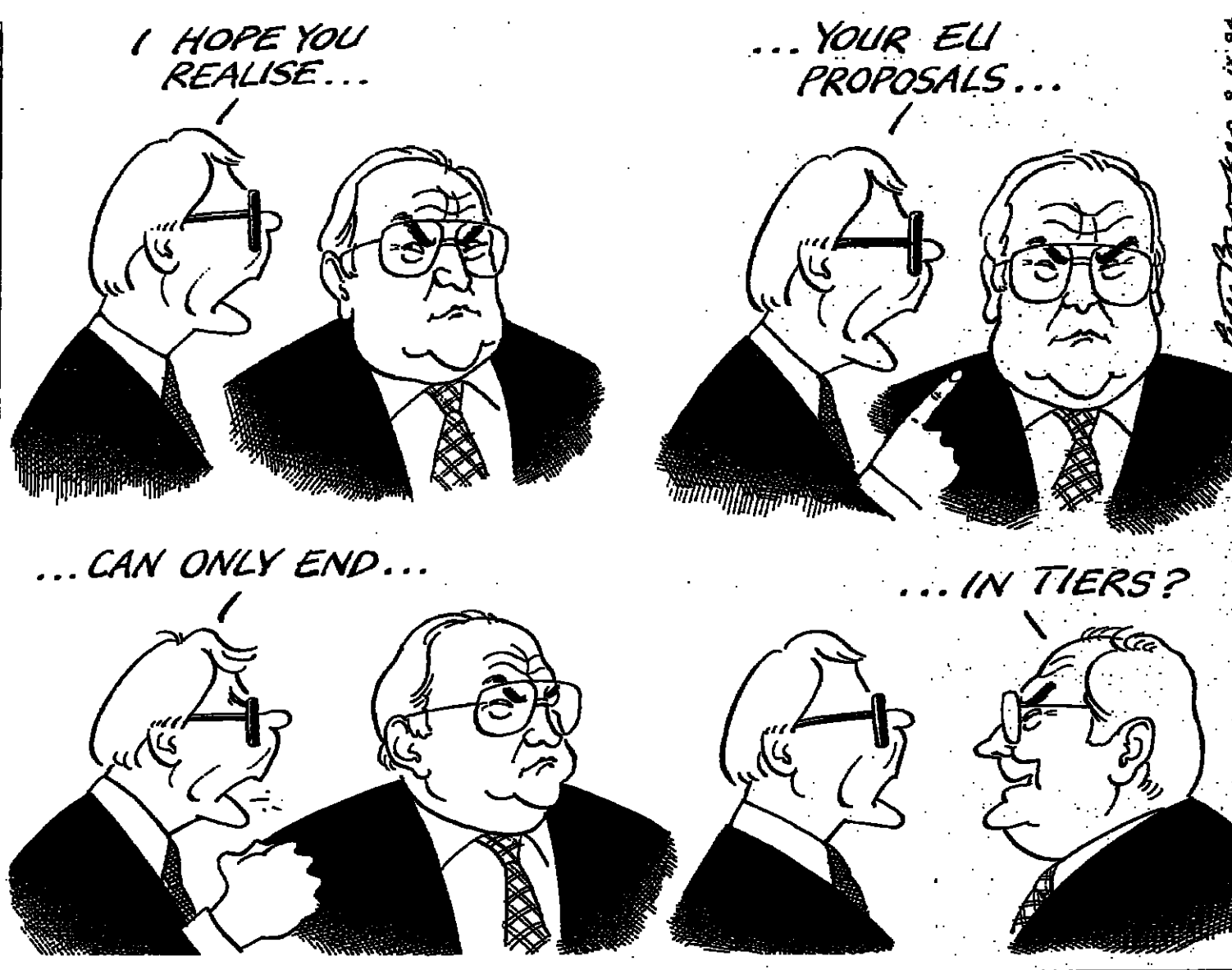
The world that looks to our monarchy as the best example of ancient tradition allied to democracy — the set-up most conducive to stable freedom — would be disappointed if it were to lose any of its splendour. Republicans may wish to drag it down, but monarchists, though fully entitled to criticise the Queen and members of her family, and often justified in doing so, should never seek to diminish the institution. They should try to show an imaginative grasp of its standing and potential, as should the Royals themselves.

Opportunities for spontaneous action beneficial to the monarchy are too often missed. The opening of Buckingham Palace to the public is a case in point. This should have been done long ago, on the Queen's own initiative and for its own sake. It should not have happened in response to adverse publicity created by Peter Brooke's maledroit remark after the Windsor fire, ostensibly as a means of contributing to the cost of restoration.

Even now, the palace is open only for a limited period, during the Queen's absence, whereas it should be open all the year round, whether or not she is there. The Vatican is open all the time, and so is the White House, which is also the working office of the world's most powerful man. Of course, when she is in residence there might need to be some restriction, more especially on days when the major rooms are being used for state ceremonies, such as investitures. But in principle the Palace should be open, and its contents visible.

Another case of immobility is that the Queen's official entourage remains grotesquely unrepresentative of her worldwide role, or even of her role as sovereign of a United Kingdom whose ethnic composition is increasingly diverse. Many members of the Royal Household are, themselves, far less out-of-date in attitude than is commonly supposed, but the mere fact that, in the top echelons, all of them have white faces is enough to make the establishment appear out-of-date, and quite inappropriate to what the Queen has come to signify.

The monarchy's traditional pageantry should be maintained, though with improvements of detail. For instance, the Queen should continue to open Parliament robed and crowned, and should drive to Westminster in a carriage procession. But the ceremony should take place not in the House of Lords, but in Westminster Hall, where all members of both Houses could be present. Traditions should never be allowed to fossilise. Imaginative change is the key to their survival.



## Martyred by mullahs

Where are the men of Islam who will condemn persecution of Christians?

A few weeks ago, in the Credo column of *The Times*, Umar Hegedus (who is the director of Aman, an Islamic educational trust, and has written here before) wrote what I can only call a sermon, and a beautiful and thoughtful sermon it was. In a few paragraphs, he extolled the Muslim religion in a way that was both wise and gentle. I am sure that many readers will have understood much better what that religion is and stands for.

In the sermon, he told of a book of prayers that a group of Muslim worshippers had given him. The book was doubly precious — because it was a gift, and for its contents, which made the book very holy to Muslims, having been written by a great-grandson of Muhammad. Nor did the preciousness of the book stop there; that great-grandson had written the book when his own father had just been murdered — murdered, that is, for his faith, because at that time he lived under cruel despots who would not tolerate the practice of the Muslim religion.

Indeed, the great-grandson, Mr Hegedus tells us, was denied a mosque and even access to his community. But, I have to tell you, this tragic story of a religious person denied the exercise of their faith by fanatical tyrants is a great deal closer in time than Muhammad and his great-grandson. For it is happening, now, in some parts of the world, to the Christian religion and those who profess it; happening again because of fanatical tyrants, though this time the fanatical tyrants are those who profess the Muslim religion. Many of these Christians are suffering more terribly than just by the denial of their religion, as also are those who have fallen foul of the tyrannical fanatics of their own religion. And I was wondering, in my wondering way, what Mr Umar Hegedus might say about these things.

Let me start with one brave figure who has been, and still is, in danger of her life because of the fanatical tyrants of her own country and her own religion. Taslima Nasreen, the Bangladeshi writer who has just given an interview to *The Times*, as she says, still in danger of her life from her compatriots (the weak government is more or less helpless in stopping the fanatics); she put a formidable case in the interview, and elsewhere she has said no less plainly that "some men would keep women

in chains — veiled, illiterate and in the kitchen. There are 60 million women in my country; not more than 15 per cent can read and write." I do not know, of course, what Mr Hegedus thinks of the subjugation of women in Muslim lands, but it is something he might comment upon, if and when he thinks it might be useful to reply to my questions.

For the questions seem to pile up. What about Algeria? Algeria, we may think, is only experiencing a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing, but that could not be said for educated Algerians: teachers, civil servants, bankers, journalists, doctors — anyone who can keep the country from collapse is in danger of being murdered by the fanatics, who want to destroy the entire fabric of the nation so they can rebuild it in their mad image. That is why they kill harmless tourists; for tourism, with the hard currency it brings in, vanishes, it will hasten the collapse.

The fanatics brawl far and foul to find such victims; not long ago seven Italian seamen, the entire crew presumably Christians, were asleep in their ship in Djedjen, an Algerian port, and the throats of all of them were cut while they slept. The Algerian Armed Islamic Group (how these gangsters love to give themselves lurid titles) had killed the Italians: well, the murderers had earlier announced that all foreigners would be killed if they did not leave the country, and presumably the Italians did not heed or hear the ukase; no doubt the gangsters then premeditated themselves on another success for the weakening of their country. (At the present, the death-count in the Algerian struggle is some 4,000; the latest deaths were those of the murdered seamen.)

Amid those Muslim madmen who slaughter their own co-religionists, what chance is there for a handful of Christians? Precious little, I fear. Apart from Sudan, of course, Iran is at present the most fanatically brutal regime (brutal to its own citizens, not

just people of a different faith), but it is those who follow a religion other than that of Muhammad who are in most danger. Leading Christian figures have been murdered by the regime (often being tortured first); three in particular should be noted.

One was Tateos Michaelian, a prominent and fearless Presbyterian; he vanished at the end of June, and his body was found at the beginning of July, dumped and full of bullets. The second was Bishop Haik Hovsepian Mehr, an evangelical; the bishop had been a man marked from long ago, because he had, taking his life in his hands a thousands times, kept up the pressure for the release of — the third of these holy Christian men — Mehdi Dibaj.

Dibaj (I wrote about him and published his testimony) was, if anything, more remarkable than the other two; he had been a Muslim, but converted to Christianity, and for that alone, he spent nine years in prison and was repeatedly tortured. Nor was that the end of his suffering; for apostasy he was condemned to death, and only when the same world protested was he finally released. But the Iranian regime wanted everything, and Dibaj was kidnapped, tortured and murdered.

At much the same time, a 70-year-old Jew was murdered by the regime for, as far as I can see, nothing but being a Jew. Certainly, Jews in Iran go in fear. The same is very terribly true of the Christians, the Baha'is, the Church of the Assemblies of God, and indeed anyone professing any faith but the prescribed one. Many have fled the country (itself a very dangerous thing to do), and so far from the regime loosening the bars, the bars are being strengthened.

Which brings me back to Taslima Nasreen. There was a letter on the subject in *The Times*, signed Rina Ahmad, who signs herself Assistant Secretary, Central Women's Association of Bangladesh. I have been writing in *The Times* for 23 years, and I had been reading it for many more years before then. Please

believe me when I say that to my thinking I have found nothing to touch for odiousness in all those years.

... Irrelevant writings... Murder or rape, of which she writes, is an unfortunate incident... The real issue is that Ms Nasreen, by making offensive remarks about religion... Bangladesh does not need ill-intentioned feminists... If a British citizen charged with having committed a crime.

But let me return to Umar Hegedus, and his beautiful, gentle, Muslim "sermon". I have to ask rather painful questions, concerning the things he said, or rather did not say. I cannot believe that Mr Hegedus could contemplate the murderous horrors of Islam with anything but a shudder. But that leaves half his argument: why does he not take his wisdom and understanding into a polemic against the mad and savage side of his religion? A man as wise and religious as he is would not shelter behind the truth that Christianity burnt people at the stake for not accepting the Christian religion, and not just because Christians stopped burning one another many centuries ago. And he would not, obviously, argue that the Muslim centuries have fully started only now, and that their burnings are therefore to come. So what else, for him, are those savages who murder innocent tourists to destroy their own country?

You see my point, I trust. A man like Hegedus must weep when he sees the things that Iran is doing in Muhammad's name, but he cannot have half his religion without the other half. What, precisely, is he going to do about it? I quote him: "Thus, any permissible action, performed with the intention to please Allah, can be considered worship." A noble attitude; but undoubtedly those who kill have the intention to please Allah, and consider it worship. And if we cannot know what Allah wants in these matters, we can be a little more mundane; action in the form of speaking out against the savage mullahs of Iran would please Allah even more would it not? Mr Hegedus may have already spoken out. But if he hasn't, shouldn't he?

I cannot commission articles for *The Times*, but I would be astonished if the editor refused to give space to Mr Hegedus to answer these questions. There are many readers, I am sure, who would like answers.

## Last days at the Elysée

Mitterrand is an enigma, says Charles Bremner

Throughout his long career, François Mitterrand has never tired of his favourite saying: *laissez du temps au temps*. For half a century in high politics the dictum has served him well as time erased the memories of scandals, betrayals and political switches that would have destroyed less dogged men. Now, however, time is running out as cancer threatens to accelerate the scheduled end, in eight months, of his long tenure as President of the Fifth Republic.

His talk yesterday of having possibly only months to live came as no surprise to a political world which has been gripped by premature campaign fever since his prostate condition deteriorated in the summer and he began chemotherapy. But time is catching up with the President in another sense. A politician steeped in culture and history, he had hoped to use his *fin de règne* to fashion an elegant exit, bequeathing France with the memory of a Socialist statesman who stood for social peace and fathered a federal European Union. "Governing," he once said, "is a way of writing one's own history."

Instead, history has snapped back and he has fallen victim to a belated bout of sockdolager. This has thickened the cloud of scandal already swirling around the Elysée Palace and it has informed citizens of the murky past of one of the century's most Machiavellian operators.

Thirteen years after leading the Left to power, Mitterrand is a solitary figure, disowned by many in the party he founded, and the object of scurrilous bestsellers that purport to take the lid off a stew of corruption, suicides, moral bankruptcy and adultery. The most damaging work, Jean Montaldo's *Mitterrand and the 40 Thieves*, has been at the top of the bestseller list for months, untroubled by lawsuits. Because of this book the President, in his almost valedictory interview yesterday, made an undignified denial of a secret fortune in Switzerland.

Most wounding for the faithful who celebrated the triumph of the Socialist leader in May 1981 has been the news, in Pierre Pétain's *Une Jeunesse Française*, of the young Mitterrand's fervour for far-right politics and the degree to which he sympathised with and worked for the wartime régime of Philippe Pétain. The President's collaboration with the writer has awakened a younger generation to his unsavoury political origins. Many are shocked by his long friendship with René Bousquet, the Vichy police chief who deported tens of thousands of Jews.

The indignation this week of such colleagues as Pierre Mauroy, Mitterrand's first Prime Minister, rings somewhat disingenuous given that no one in the political world is unaware of the tortuous route which took him to his conversion to socialism in the late 1960s. In the early years of the Fourth Republic, in which Mitterrand served 11 times as minister, he was a figure of the centre-right known for his charm and devotion to intrigue.

In the heat of the Algerian war, as Justice Minister, he proclaimed the colony to be eternally French soil and did nothing to oppose the tortures being inflicted there by French forces. In 1954, he was investigated on the orders of Pierre Mendès France, the Prime Minister, on suspicion of giving secrets to Moscow. In 1959, his career was deemed to be finished by the scandal of the Observatoire. In this, gunmen shot up his Peugeot and he "escaped" by leaping a fence. Those involved claimed he had staged the attack himself. Mitterrand acknowledged that he had been "warned" in advance and was charged with contempt for the law but the case was dropped.

Another decade found Mitterrand, a long-time foe of Charles de Gaulle, as champion of the Left, a conversion which convinced few old colleagues. Guy Mollet, with whom he had served in one Fourth Republic government, said: "Mitterrand is not actually a Socialist; he has just learnt how to sound like one."

But Mitterrand is a brilliant strategist; he forged a new party and allied himself with the pro-Moscow Communists. Victory came in May 1981 when, newly installed in the General's old Elysée throne, he paid homage at the tomb of Jean Jaurès, the founder of French socialism. Mitterrand soon dropped the doctrines of true socialism, but throughout his 13 years he has managed to preserve the enigmatic image which he has always cultivated. For this he made the most of the monarchical mystery of a presidential system, which, when de Gaulle created it, he had denounced as a "permanent coup d'état".

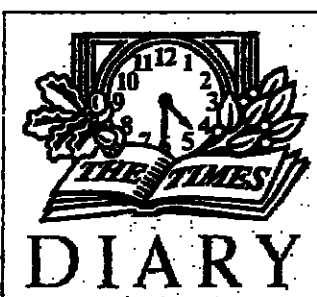
In the twilight of his long reign, a generation of young voters has never known another President. Despite all the discredit that has befallen him of late, polls show that the old "Sphynx" still enjoys the favour of more than 40 per cent of the French. France has always preferred brilliant performers, however cynical, to undazzling moralists so there is every reason to believe that time will come again

## Haughty cuisine

THERE is a reassuring calm in the face of adversity at Buckingham Palace where some MPs on the Commons Public Accounts Committee are now looked upon with the same disdain as tabloid vulgarities. The Royal Household is planning improvements to the Palace.

Planners at Westminster City Council have received an application for a brand new entrance to a grace-and-favour apartment occupied by the Crown Equerry, Lieutenant-Colonel Seymour Gilbert-Denham. Should it be approved, he will have splendid railings and new gates in front of his porch.

A separate application has also been lodged for improvements to the kitchen wing, which needs an overhaul, according to the Palace. The move will doubtless be welcomed by the Duke of Edinburgh who has often complained that his food is cold by the time it reaches him in his private apartments. The Palace explains that the expenditure is absolutely necessary. "It's all part of a long-term programme," says a spokesman.



I've never had a bad dinner there," he says, having tucked into Her Majesty's lunches, teas and dinners over three decades. "It's very good food and served on golden plates and you meet all sorts of distinguished people."

### Major innings

EXCITEMENT at the cricket square of Fochabers, Morayshire, where Ivor McIvor, who at 73 claims to be Britain's oldest village league cricketer, has just drawn up the stumps until next season. After

"I was delighted to hear of the stalwart work you have done for your cricketer club over so many years. I wanted to send you my congratulations on such a long innings," writes Major.

McIvor's wife Rita is less gushing. "I'm not sure if he's the oldest cricketer but he's certainly the most stupid," she says. "He's had nine operations for varicose veins and he still insists on playing, that's why."

### Child banker

HOW HEARTENING it is to see a grand banker and a cousin of the Prince of Wales revert to puppyhood. Sir Evelyn de Rothschild and Lord Romsey have collaborated over a film series for children about a fluffy pink elephant in grey trousers called Mummie.

The *Magic Adventures of Mummie*, a 13-part animated series, hits the television screens later this month and you can bet that de Rothschild and Romsey will be glued to it. Romsey's company, Britt Allcroft Productions, financed the venture, based on the 1930s novels by Katherine Tozer, in which Mummie forms an expeditionary force with a scarecrow and

his youth, has been consulted. "Evelyn is a great fan of Mummie," explains Romsey. "He still has his cuddly toy and newspaper from when he was a child."

### Perfidious gift

MARGARET Thatcher never could thank François Mitterrand enough for his support during the Falklands campaign. "He never faltered," she would brag imperiously while castigating those heads of state who refused to express similar solidarity.

But Sir Charles Powell, Thatcher's foreign policy adviser, sug-



gests Mitterrand's backing was not quite as solid as she thought. In his Radio 4 series, *Entente Cordiale*, next week, he explains how Mitterrand presented Thatcher with a vast globe which she placed proudly outside the Cabinet Room.

Later she inspected the gift closely. "To my horror, these islands that meant so much to us were not called Falklands — they were called Malvinas," she says firmly. "So down the globe went to the big landing right at the bottom of the stairs."

PROOF of the state of play at the English National Opera came minutes after its launch of a £40 million refurbishment appeal for the London Coliseum this week. Heavy rain flooded the stage and filled the orchestra pit, and a rehearsal of Tosca was abandoned.

### Cap that

AT LORDS yesterday, the conversation turned to the mystery of Denis Compton's kneecap. Surgeons removed it after a history of trouble in 1955 and it now resides in a plastic bag in a tin in the MCC museum.

While researching Denis, The

author Tim Heald tried to have the kneecap examined by an expert. He wanted to prove that Compton's career was cut short unjustly and that the kneecap need never have been removed. "Unfortunately, the museum says it's far too precious to release. So we'll never know," he moaned. On hearing of Heald's plan, Compton turned green. "I don't even want to talk about it," he spluttered.

### Post chastened

NEW TECHNOLOGY at the Post Office is not all that it is cracked up to be, if the experience of an individual who tried to send a letter using the PO's new Electronic Post service is anything to go by.

Peter Scott-Smith sent out hundreds of copies of his marketing newsletter, *Debrief*, using the service, including one to the chief executive of the Post Office, Bill Cockburn. Yesterday the letter to Cockburn was returned to Scott-Smith, unopened — which usually happens if the Post Office cannot find the addressee. "It was the Post Office that gave me the address in the first place," he said. The Post Office was contrition itself. "It's a one-off and we're investigating"





## THE POPE'S DIVISIONS

The Catholic cause has been damaged in Cairo this week

The Vatican has suffered a painful lesson in its political limitations over the past few days. At the International Conference on Population and Development it stands accused of extreme self-partiality and a total want of consideration of others. As a traditionalist institution, it should be aware that such failings have often been punished in international affairs. The Pope's emissaries have succeeded in transforming a conference with broad and urgent aims into a sterile colloquy on abortion. The Vatican has brought itself no good by this.

Much of the attention in Cairo—in public as well as in private—is now focused on the trajectory and objectives of Vatican diplomacy. Sharp questions have already begun to be asked: what is the Vatican's precise place at conferences of this nature, the aims of which are to mould new policy in such domestic spheres as education, employment and healthcare? Is it appropriate for the representatives of a religious institution, albeit one that enjoys international personality, to be accorded such high profile at a gathering of nation states? And conversely, if the Catholic religion is present, why not the whole gamut of the world's faiths?

The depth of feeling apparent in the rejection by the majority of the Vatican's methods at Cairo suggests that there may well be a reassessment of the Vatican's international role. Baroness Chalker, Britain's Minister of Overseas Development, has been trenchant in her criticism of the position taken by Mgr Renato Martino, the Pope's representative. Even Iran, with which the Vatican sought to make shameless common cause, has accepted its responsibility to deal with overpopulation.

Often, in its long mercurial history, the diplomacy of the Vatican have been in open

conflict with secular international interests. But this is perhaps the first occasion on which the Vatican has been in opposition to such a monolith of shared belief. Since the end of the papacy's efforts to control Europe through clout and clients, its diplomacy has concentrated on the strengthening of its ties with local churches and the advancement of peace. The diplomacy of states, however, is calibrated only by national interest, and where there is a powerful coincidence in the perception of national interest, or where the interests of a single state are thought to be inseparable from the interest of the sum of states, a wall of reason is erected which cannot easily be breached.

The Vatican, in attempting to breach this wall, may be committing an historic error. It has come to Cairo as the standard-bearer of an ethical system, claiming to provide a framework of moral norms which all other nations ought to accept and within which their domestic policies ought to operate. This incursion into the internal affairs of states is a product of the Vatican's historical discomfort with the concept of the nation-state, dating back to the Peace of Westphalia. The evolution of the law and identity of nations was influenced irreversibly by that Peace of 1648, which was vilified memorably by Pope Innocent X as "null, void, invalid, iniquitous, unjust, damnable, reprobate, inane and empty of meaning for all time".

Since the Peace weakened the authority of the Vatican's universal dominion, such anguish was inevitable. There lurks the ghost of Westphalia in Mgr Martino's dogged stand in Cairo; yet like Pope Innocent X before him, Pope John Paul II cannot resist the tenacity of purpose of the nation-state. There is still time for the Vatican to recognise its own limitations.

## MINISTER TO SCIENCE

A message to business, boffins and bureaucrats

The role of science minister in a British Government is not one for which ambitious politicians clamour. There is no power, and little patronage. David Hunt, the new minister, certainly could influence more people's lives more directly when he was Secretary for Wales. The Welsh may sometimes have been unresponsive, but seldom as restless as the natives of the scientific jungle, whose iron-toms beat an insistent message of government parsimony and neglect.

Mr Hunt yesterday arranged to please his hosts, the British Association, with a grant of £140,000 to organise another science week next March, and a further £150,000 for the Committee for the Public Understanding of Science. Thus were garlands easily won, but much tougher challenges lie ahead.

His department, the Office of Science and Technology, pretends to control British science when in reality it manages only a fifth of it. The great bulk of the Government's science budget is spent on defence research, by the Department of Trade and Industry, and by other government departments. William Waldegrave's great upheaval reorganised the research councils—probably already the best-run part of the system—while leaving the rest untouched. A full scientific strategy would therefore call for difficult cross-Whitehall co-operation to ensure that the soft words of the OST are not being contradicted by hard men at the Treasury or the DTI. Mr Hunt, with his vaunted close links to the Prime Minister, ought to be in a position to provide that.

It will be more difficult to ensure that British science remains in healthy condition

at a time when it is shrinking as a proportion of world science. Traditionally, the health of science is measured by what is spent on it, rather than by what it produces. Yesterday Mr Hunt said that he would like to see success judged by output rather than by input: but while it is easy to count the pounds spent, it is almost impossible to measure the results until long after. Such output measures as do exist—citation indices, for example, which gauge the importance of research by how often it is cited—suggest that not all is well.

More urgently, there are still too few British businesses which rank among the best in making a return on research and development. The chemical and pharmaceutical industries apart, too much of British industry has shied away from the risks and rewards of science. Engineers, once the princes of private enterprise, struggle along unflattered, poor cousins to their scientific brethren. Of course, the reasons for this state of affairs predate the OST, and its legacy is likely to be around long after the OST has joined Mintech in the heaven set aside for well-meant failures.

Mr Hunt's department is trying to remedy the faults by a new approach, Technology Foresight, which aims to identify those technologies that are vital to Britain's future. This is not, we are assured, the same as trying to pick winners, though it bears a marked resemblance. We must hope that Technology Foresight provides the right answers, and so must Mr Hunt: for it is by that, and not by his visit this week to the scientific lair, that he will be judged.

## THE ROYAL BILLS

A little information is a dangerous thing

Members of the royal family have become used to having their personal lives paraded over television and newspapers. Yesterday, however, the questions were different: how efficiently were their "firm" being run; why were the telephone bills so high; and why did so little money from the opening of Buckingham Palace appear to be spent on the repair of Windsor Castle? Stories of that sort caused considerable anger at the Palace—and understandably so.

The occasion was the publication of the Public Accounts Committee's report on the £20 million of public money that goes towards the running of five royal palaces. Included in the report were items such as a £766,000 telephone bill. What some reports failed to make clear was that the total included about £250,000 on operators' wages, £250,000 on special line rentals and £100,000 on maintenance. Only 23 per cent of the bill was on call charges, and personal calls by members of the Royal Household were paid for by the callers themselves.

Even more damaging was the suggestion that some of the £4.8 million raised by opening Buckingham Palace to the public might have been misappropriated: only £2.2 million was handed over towards the restoration of Windsor Castle. It ought to have been made clear that the £4.8 million was the figure for turnover, not profit. Out of that came wages and uniforms for 200 workers, souvenirs for the shop, heightened security and all the building work needed to protect the Palace against damage by visitors. As the PAC report acknowledges, all the profit was paid over to Windsor Castle.

The muck stirred up yesterday created fertile ground for political complaints. One Labour MP, Alan Williams, who happens

also to be a member of the PAC, seems to be bidding for the crown formerly worn by Willie Hamilton: as republican-in-chief at the House of Commons. Yesterday he questioned the justification for the 272 grace-and-favour residences in the gift of the Queen. He accused members of the Royal Household, which he called "this pampered court", of "indulging in a lavish lifestyle".

Of that 272, all but 40 pay rent for their accommodation, albeit at lower than market rates. It is difficult to see, however, how the residences could be rented out on the open market: security reasons alone would prevent that. Even if market rents (in this less than free market) could be assessed, the palace officials who live in them are not, on the whole, paid enough to be able to afford them. The precise choice of the beneficiaries and the actual percentage of their salaries clawed back in rent could be questioned; but that is a petting issue from which to launch a republican onslaught.

Such an attack has been allowed to develop because of the traditional opacity that surrounds the workings of the Royal Household. Uniquely in the field of public expenditure, its accounts cannot be demanded by the National Audit Office. Greater transparency in future, including bringing the Royal Household into the NAO's remit, would be in tune with the culture of accountability today.

The Department of National Heritage does, however, receive detailed accounts from the household. The department could discourage misinformation by publishing them. It would have been seemly had a minister from the National Heritage Department made supportive noises yesterday on behalf of the royal family.

## Profitless closure of Swan Hunter

From Dr Peter Hilditch

Sir, The almost inevitable closure of Swan Hunter (report, *Business*, September 8) cannot be justified on either defence or industrial grounds. Defence procurement policy is said to be based upon competition, yet Britain could be left with only one builder of larger warships: VSEL.

If the MoD has carried out a cost-benefit analysis of the closure of Swan Hunter, taking into account the impact of reduced competition in addition to loss of tax revenue, additional unemployment benefit etc, this should be published.

It may be argued that the market for warships is no longer large enough to support the industry in its present form. In that case, could not Swan Hunter be given some defence work, at a reasonably competitive price, in order to ease the transition to purely civilian manufacture? It would then also remain a potential competitor for future warship orders.

Both commercially managed royal dockyards are guaranteed (partly at the expense of Swan Hunter) a core programme of warship refits. They have already successfully diversified into areas like yacht building and railway rolling-stock repair because the guaranteed core programme allows them to spread overheads.

The President of the Board of Trade should explain exactly what are the overall benefits to the British economy and to the taxpayer of allowing Swan Hunter to die.

Yours faithfully,  
PETER HILDITCH  
(Research Fellow, Centre for Maritime Historic Studies, Exeter University),  
38 School Lane,  
Pulbourn, Cambridge,  
September 8.

## Animal exports

From Mr Mark Glover

Sir, After more than 20 years of inertia in the face of growing public concern about the cruelty of live exports the NEU is calling for a code of practice (report, September 6). The move is aimed at convincing ferry companies to continue transporting farm animals to the Continent for slaughter.

A code of practice is not the way ahead. Indeed, as you reported, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food admits that enforcement would be difficult. As successive animal welfare investigations of nightmare live-export journeys have shown, existing legislation is routinely ignored. Last year the European Commission in Brussels conceded that "the law is systematically flouted".

Farmers say the ferry companies' ban will increase suffering, as British animals will be replaced by livestock from Eastern Europe. The farmers could have put their house in order years ago but they did nothing.

Yours faithfully,  
MARK GLOVER (Consultant),  
Respect for Animals,  
PO Box 500, Nottingham NG1 3AS,  
September 6.

From Mr Peter Atkinson

MP for Hexham (Conservative)

Sir, The decision by the Swedish board of Stena Sealink not to carry livestock on cross-Channel ferries will damage the livelihoods of farmers in my constituency, as well as those in other upland areas of the UK: farmers and communities least able to bear such a loss.

The French import nearly two million live lambs a year to meet a shortfall in their own production and needed to sustain their large abattoirs. British farmers with high-quality lambs have captured that valuable market.

The French will simply look elsewhere for supplies, which they will find from willing sellers in Eastern European countries whose welfare standards were recently criticised by the RSPCA (report, early editions, August 23). Lambs will then be transported over vast distances by hauliers whose standards are unregulated and will be below our own. Where is the welfare gain in that?

Yours faithfully,  
PETER ATKINSON,  
House of Commons,  
September 7.

## Mantegna's frescoes

From Mr Geoffrey Hinton

Sir, Your critic, Richard Cork, laments that he was only permitted to view the famous Mantegna frescoes at Mantua for five minutes (Arts, August 30). There is a reason for this restriction, which he may not know.

The Camera degli Sposi's four walls each measure 8.05 metres in breadth; the height of the room is 7 metres. For many years the Mantuan authorities have expressed grave anxiety about the damaging effect of the moist breath of the many thousands who visit this surprisingly small room each year. Indeed, at one time they contemplated constructing a replica which could be shown especially to the many visiting school parties.

Has Mr Cork forgotten what happened to the cave paintings at Lascaux, where access is now barred?

Yours faithfully,  
GEOFFREY HINTON,  
1 Northmoor Place,  
Northmoor Road, Oxford.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

## Benn's Bill to end Monarch's role

From Mr Tony Benn, MP for Chesterfield (Labour)

Sir, In his interesting and constructive article in today's *Times* about the developing public debate on the role of the monarchy Peter Riddell wrote that "Parliament is formally barred from discussing the monarchy".

This is not so since Parliament can and does debate the monarchy, providing that where any proposed legislation would affect the royal prerogative the Queen has to give her consent in advance, which is automatically granted.

I have introduced a number of constitutional reform Bills, one of which would transfer all royal prerogatives to the House of Commons, and the latest of which, The Commonwealth of Britain Bill, would end the constitutional role of the monarchy altogether, replacing it with a commonwealth. Each of these Bills has received the Queen's consent, in writing, through the Home Secretary.

I am now working on a Bill to amend the Act of Settlement of 1700 to

provide that after the death, or retirement, of the present Queen Parliament will be required to arrange for an election to allow a new head of state to be chosen by the people, and the Queen's consent would be granted for that too.

I shall shortly be writing to Commonwealth governments, through their high commissioners in London, to seek their support for a proposal that in future the title "Head of the Commonwealth" should rotate, as does the presidency of the European Union and the UN Security Council.

None of these constitutional proposals, which would strip the prime minister of the day of unjustifiable executive powers, would affect the Queen or her family personally, and they should all be seen as a long overdue, and necessary, part of a modernisation programme for Britain as we move into the next century.

Yours,  
TONY BENN,  
House of Commons,  
September 7.

## 'Thou shalt not shop'

From Mr Roy Edey

Sir, The reference to my activities over unlawful Sunday trading (Trus and Ours, Law, September 6) requires clarification.

In July, Woolworths and others took Harrow magistrates to the High Court for granting me summonses to prosecute them. Local authorities throughout England and Wales had failed in their mandatory duty to enforce the former law. The Attorney-General had refused to intervene. The divisional court ruled the summonses valid and upheld my right to prosecute.

I am to ask the Court of Appeal to declare the provisions of the Sunday

Trading Act 1994 unconstitutional and unlawful. The Home Secretary misinformed the Sovereign and Parliament in alleging that the former law was muddled and unenforceable. My successful private prosecutions have shown that argument to be invalid.

The Home Secretary has failed to protect the Sovereign's coronation oath to uphold true religion. If my action fails there will be nothing to stop a future government with a majority carrying through Parliament a measure to abolish the monarchy, the Church of England or even the loyal Opposition in Parliament.

Yours faithfully,  
ROY EDEY,  
Lower Flat, Field House North,  
West Street, Harrow, Middlesex.

## Cathedral repairs

From the Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool

Sir, Mr Anthony Jaggard (letter, August 30) questions the morality of accepting public money in the form of an English Heritage grant towards the repair of the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, a building less than 30 years old, which he describes, quoting your report of August 17, as being "deliberately built cheaply".

I can assure Mr Jaggard and your readers that the cathedral was not built cheaply. It was, however, built extremely economically, within a strict budget and without any frills. Its present need of extensive repairs is due not to false economies, but largely to the specification of materials and techniques which were insufficiently tried and tested: they have not stood the test of time.

We are naturally delighted and grateful that English Heritage have made such a generous offer (approx-

mately 25 per cent) towards the cost of our repairs, and have no scruples in accepting their offer. It is not however, I am sure, intended as "an ecumenical gesture".

English Heritage judge buildings on their architectural merit and historic significance, not on their religious affiliations, and offer grant in proportion to the need for repair and the ability of the owner to meet that need.

The Metropolitan Cathedral was described by the Secretary of State at the time of its "listing" as "a major imaginative work of 1960s architecture, and one that has found a place in the affections of many people on Merseyside and elsewhere", and is clearly regarded by English Heritage as one of the (perhaps all-too-few) buildings of the 1960s worth preserving for posterity.

Yours faithfully,  
VINCENT MALONE,  
17 West Oakhill Park,  
Liverpool L3.

## RAF in Russia

From Mr R. G. Lovell Webster Browne

Sir, Group Captain Peter Knapton's letter (August 30) refers to the exploits of the two RAF Hurricane squadrons—81 and 134—sent to Vaenga, 15 miles from Murmansk, in the late summer of 1941.

It is not widely known that these RAF squadrons were in action against the Luftwaffe on various occasions before their aircraft were handed over to the Russians later in the year; and that the first and possibly only RAF fighter pilot to die in combat over Russia lost his life as a result.

Sergeant Norman Holt Smith from Leeds was killed on September 12 when five Hurricanes of 81 Squadron engaged five Messerschmitt 109Es

over enemy lines west of Murmansk. Three of the five German fighters were claimed as destroyed, together with the spotter plane they were covering.

Norman Smith was buried in the cemetery for Soviet heroes on the hillside above Vaenga. The Russians, unasked, made up a White Ensign which, with the flag of the Soviet Naval Air Service, covered the coffin: they also sent a band, and a firing party. The service was read by the RAF signals officer.

The balance of Norman Smith's pay due was forwarded in due course to his parents by the RAF. It was 16s 7d.

Yours faithfully,  
GILES BROWNE,  
The Stable House,  
Shipton Oliffe,  
Nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,  
September 1.

## Justice to William

From Mr Brian Bagnall

Sir, Alexandra Frean's report (later editions, August 31) on the return of Richard Crompton's William to BBC1 in November is accompanied by photographs of past and future screen Williams. Also an archetypal William illustration from the books.

The illustration, whose name is almost never mentioned, was Thomas Henry, who deserves to be remembered for indelibly printing on all readers' and casting directors' minds the realisation of William and all the other characters in Crompton's William stories.

Yours faithfully,  
BRIAN BAGNALL,  
Shalford Mill, Shalford, Surrey,  
August 31.

From Mr Trevor Dannatt

Sir, My son, Adrian Dannatt, who played the role of William in John Davies's excellent series in 1976, is not a stockbroker, as you report. He is in fact the freelance journalist domiciled in New York who, from time to time, appears on your arts pages.

I am sure he will be amused by the slur rather than call for his lawyer.

Yours faithfully,  
TREVOR DANNATT,  
115 Crawford Street, W1,  
August 31.

## Training doctors

From Mrs Heather Cope

Sir, Your report of August 29, stating that graduates from certain universities in the Czech Republic are granted limited registration by the General Medical Council, needs clarification.

The GMC will want to be assured that the clinical training of English-speaking students in Czech hospitals will not be adversely affected by communication difficulties. We have advised course organisers that we cannot at this stage offer any guarantee that the degrees will continue to be acceptable for the purpose of limited registration, and have stressed that tests of English and medical knowledge, conducted in the United Kingdom at regular intervals, are a precondition for such registration.

The basis for granting full registration is rather different. A successful applicant must have demonstrated a high standard during extensive professional experience and the GMC assesses each application on its individual merits.

Yours faithfully,  
HEATHER COPE  
(Deputy Registrar),  
General Medical Council,  
44 Hallam Street, W1,  
September 1.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

## A 'carbuncle-free' zone in Brighton

From the Leader of Brighton Borough Council

Sir, Simon Jenkins's unwarranted attack ("A carbuncle for Brighton", September 3; also letters, August 31, September 1) has been prompted by the application by a local businessman to develop a new fairground on the beach at Kemp Town—on the site of an old fairground, the quality of which needs to be improved.

Developers are free to make planning applications. Local authorities then have to judge their merits against the local plan and locally determined priorities. Indeed, the Brighton Borough Labour Group has decided to oppose the application and, since Labour controls the authority, it will be rejected (report, *News in Brief*, September 5).

Mr Jenkins asks readers to imagine a funfair "in The Mall overlooking Carlton House Terrace". In fact the Kemp Town site is on the beach, well over 70ft below the main road.

The council is the planning authority, and is accused of "abbreviating" the planning process. Yet we have worked entirely in accordance with the statutory timetable, which in turn is dependent on when an application is lodged. We have also delayed considering the application in view of the public response. The council will consider the issue formally on September 20. I do not believe that a fair-minded person could describe this as either corruption or a distortion of the planning process.

A sly reference to "masonic activity" has no justification: Brighton Council insists that councillors who are masons must declare their interests.

Brighton's marina was begun in the 1970s by the Marina Company, not George Walker as Mr Jenkins says. He criticises the Brighton Conference Centre, a building which I agree is devoid of architectural merit, and I may not admire its design, but tastes change: given another 20 years I doubt it will be Grade I listed—but you never know. Inside, the centre is first-rate, and the business generated pumps hundreds of millions of pounds into the local economy every year.

It would be a very different seafront indeed if the hotels which spend for 60 per cent of their business on this trade were to shut. At the bottom of West Street there are two amusement arcades. They were built many years ago; I doubt they are the "pride and joy" of Victor Heal as Mr Jenkins alleges, as he does not own them. Maybe they are rather brash, but their presence has not discouraged other recent investment: a new hotel and several prestigious office developments have opened there in the last few years.

Mr Jenkins implies that Brighton Council does not take care of the town's inheritance. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have restored the Royal Pavilion in exacting detail to the tune of £10 million. We have invested heavily in Preston Manor, a beautiful Georgian manor house, open to the public.

As well as the specialist Royal Pavilion staff, we have the largest conservation team of any South Coast authority. We frequently feature in the top ten of borough authorities providing restoration grants, and recently well over £1 million was invested in town conservation schemes. And we run an annual design competition to reward the best in conservation and innovation.

The beachfront is all about major events and family fun. The council is investing heavily in its infrastructure, and our work has already stimulated £450,000 worth of private-sector investment.

Does Mr Jenkins really believe that all this is "fools' gold"? It is naive to assume a town can exist and thrive if its visitors arrive only for "the pleasure of seeing light playing off water on to rock, cliff and landscape".

Yours truly,  
STEVE BASSAM,  
Leader, Brighton Borough Council,  
Longstone, 25 Church Place,  
Brighton, Sussex,  
September 8.

From Dr Peter Weston

Sir, Brighton Borough Council has, it seems, earned the respect and thanks of all lovers of Brighton by relegating the plans for Peter Pan's Playground to Never-Never Land, which is where they belong.

Yours faithfully,  
PETER WESTON,  
17 Cissbury Road,  
Worthing, West Sussex,  
September 8.

## No place at the bank

From Mr W. T. Rowland

Sir, My wife's favourite sherry is now sold in blue bottles, the colour of which reminds us both of the old poison bottles. The suppliers advise that "the packaging was a little unexciting", suggesting that a change from boring old brown bottles was called for.

Our local recycling container has only three apertures, for green, brown and clear glass bottles. Are we now to go back to old habits and bin the new bottles?

Yours faithfully,  
W. T. ROWLAND,  
5 Fairfairs Close,  
Billingshurst, West Sussex,  
September 3.

















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Enter the unreal world of the future office



ARTS 35-37

Eric Clapton rolls back the years to rock with the blues



SPORT 38-44

Last chance to win £10,000 with First XV rugby

THE LATEST UCAS VACANCIES Page 34

# THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9 1994

## CBI declares opposition to tax cuts

By Philip Bassett  
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS leaders warned last night against interest rate rises and tax cuts, and insisted that the Government and the Bank of England had to fulfil their economic promises if a rise in inflation was to be avoided.

Coming after figures from the Confederation of British Industry suggesting that high street sales growth is slowing, the warning from Howard Davies, the CBI's director-general, about remaining structural weaknesses in the economy, in spite of the recovery, will strike a note of caution among ministers and industrialists.

In a speech to business leaders in Glasgow, Mr Davies issued a series of warnings on the economy, though he emphasised that there could be little doubt that the economy was on a path of steady growth with low inflation.

He insisted that pressure for tax cuts for "short-term political reasons" from some MPs "simply has to be resisted".

The stable economic policy that business wanted to see was being threatened, he suggested, by Treasury questioning of the Government's policy on competitiveness. This was laid out in the White Paper on the issue from Michael Heseltine, the President of the Board of Trade.

Many companies remained hesitant about prospects for inflation and interest rates, he said. "There is no point in trying to tell people that they are wrong, and that this time they ought to believe the Government's forecast, even though to have done so in the

Economists expressed concern over the CBI's latest distributive trades survey, which suggested to some analysts a slide back to the depths last seen during the recession

past would have led their business off a cliff.

"We just have to hope that this time the Treasury — and increasingly the Bank — can deliver on their promises."

He accepted that the CBI's latest distributive trades survey suggested that the tax increases in the spring had begun to affect retail sales. But since Britain needed a solidly based recovery, rather than one based on consumption, a modest high street slowdown was no cause for alarm. It might even persuade the Bank to postpone any increase in interest rates "for some time".

City analysts viewed the CBI's figures with concern.

Pennington 25  
Stock Market 26

The weakness of its indicators suggested to some a slipping back to the lowest levels seen in the recession.

The CBI said that year-on-year sales growth in Britain's shops slowed in August for the second successive month. Its survey of 15,000 outlets in retailing, wholesaling and the motor trades showed that retail sales volume was only modestly higher than a year ago, and by less than retailers had expected.

The balance of retailers reporting a rise in sales in August — those recording an increase set against those registering a fall — was 2 per cent,

compared with 12 per cent in July and 27 per cent in June.

Selling prices are easing, the survey shows. Nigel Whitaker, the chairman of the CBI's distributive trades panel, said: "A year-on-year slowdown in retail sales last month was perhaps not surprising, given the strong growth in volumes reported this time last year."

Trade figures published yesterday were better than the City had expected. Combined with the findings of the CBI survey, they reinforced the picture of economic recovery led by exports, rather than consumer demand.

For the Government, an export-led recovery, with subdued domestic demand and low inflation, would be a welcome break with past upturns based on short-lived consumer booms.

Britain's trade gap with the rest of the world narrowed to £690 million in June, from £1.04 billion in May, the official figures showed. Exports rose 3.7 per cent, to £113 billion, while imports edged ahead by a mere 0.4 per cent, to £12 billion.

Germany experienced an annualised rate of growth of 2.8 per cent in the first half this year, without any evidence of overheating, government officials said. "The economy in western Germany grew 2.2 per cent, as in the first quarter. The recovery reflected strong demand from abroad, Günter Resch, the economics minister, said.



Outside, looking in: Giles Shepard, who has seen Savoy profits receive a battering

## NEC set to spend \$1bn in Scotland

By Colin Nairn  
WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

SCOTLAND has beaten California to a \$1 billion investment in a new microchip plant to be built by NEC of Japan, the world's second biggest semiconductor manufacturer, according to sources close to the company.

NEC, which lost world market leadership to Intel, its American arch-rival, declined to say whether a decision had been taken, but the Tokyo sources said that an announcement in favour of Scotland would be made in a fortnight. The company had said earlier that it was considering setting up the new plant in one of the two locations.

Livingston, in Scotland's so-called silicon glen, is understood to have been chosen as the site of the new plant on the basis of its low-cost labour, closeness to continental Europe and a package of incentives offered by the British authorities, which could reach 30 per cent of start-up costs.

NEC earlier invested £240 million in a microchip plant at Livingston, which currently employs 900 people. The rival Californian location is also the site of an existing NEC plant at Roseville, with a workforce almost twice as big as that in Livingston.

The rush to build new microchip capacity follows the surge in demand, as the world economy revives and industry increasingly focuses on electronic replacements for old technology. Two big microchip plants are to be built in Leipzig, eastern Germany, by NEC's German and American rivals.

With the new Livingston plant, NEC will boost the share of its microchips produced outside Japan to 20 per cent from 15 per cent, reflecting the increased burden the strong yen has placed on Japanese domestic industry.

## BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES	
FT-SE 100	3180.0 (-23.5)
Yield	3.97%
FT-SE A All share	1598.07 (-10.31)
Nikkei	19917.78 (-108.02)
New York	3002.40 (+16.15)*
Dow Jones	472.67 (+1.68)*
S&P Composite	472.67 (+1.68)*
US RATE	
Federal Funds	4 1/4% (4 1/4%)
Long Bond	7.55% (7.55%)
LONDON MONEY	
3-month Interbank	5 1/4% (5 1/4%)
Life long gilt	101 (100)
future (Sept)	101 (100)
STERLING	
New York	1.5435* (1.5445)
London	1.5437 (1.5468)
DM	1.5437 (2.3653)
FF	6.2450 (8.2127)
SP	2.0146 (2.0040)
Yen	80.40* (82.45)
S Index	78.8 (78.6)
DOLLAR	
London	1.5380* (1.5505)
DM	1.5380* (5.3140)
FF	1.5380* (1.2980)
Yen	80.40* (82.45)
S Index	62.8 (62.7)
Tokyo close Yen	93.24
NORTH SEA OIL	
Brent 15-day (Oct)	\$16.45 (\$16.55)
GOLD	
London close	\$391.25 (\$389.75)

\* Denotes midday trading price

## BTR disappoints

SHARES in BTR, one of Britain's largest industrial conglomerates, tumbled 44p to 338p, on disappointment at first-half results. The results were accompanied by a warning that pricing pressures could hit results during the second half of the year. Page 25, *Tempos* 26

## Market caveat

The City has welcomed the new market for small companies which replaces the Unlisted Securities Market but small investors should be wary of buying shares in the new companies. Page 27

## British Gas pegs dividend

By Martin Walker  
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

BRITISH Gas reassured the City yesterday with a maintained interim dividend of 6.4p in spite of threats earlier this year that the tightening regulatory squeeze on the company could lead to a reduction.

Shares in the company, which eight years after privatisation still has two million investors, rose 3p to 298p. A trimmed dividend would have been the biggest upset over any payout since BP, the oil producer, heavily cut its dividend in 1992.

But Gas was sparing on the comfort it would offer investors, refusing to comment on future dividend policy before a presentation on September 29 that would go into this and future developments.

The company reported net losses for the normally unprofitable second quarter, to June 30, of £4 million, down from £16 million. As a result, first-half profits fell £4 million to £630 million, reported on an historic-cost basis. Interim earnings per share fell from 14.7p to 14.5p.

Richard Giordano, the chairman, said the financial performance continued to reflect trading and regulatory pressures although the figures benefited from lower interest charges and colder weather in the first half of 1994.

Lower oil prices and a reduction in the volume of gas sold to the UK gas supply business reduced profits from the exploration and production business.

Gas options, page 27

## Walker says £5m fee was earned

By Our City Staff

A £5 MILLION consultancy fee paid to a businessman who arranged deals for the Brent Walker leisure and property group was legitimately earned, a court heard yesterday.

George Walker, former chairman and chief executive of Brent Walker, denied the payment was part of an alleged bogus profits fraud. He told Southwark Crown Court that it was a genuine payment to Michael Eland, a Paris businessman, who had deserved every penny for the "tremendous" deals he had put the group's way in the 1980s.

Mr Walker said: "He did services for Brent Walker at a very cheap rate. Any professional body that had done the same amount of work would have asked double the money. It was a great deal."

The prosecution has alleged that Mr Walker, 65, stole £17 million from his leisure empire during a six-year fraud

operation, laundered the money abroad and then returned it to his company's profits in a bid to attract investors and fund expansion.

Peter Rook QC, for the prosecution, has claimed that the £5 million payment was part of a "smokescreen" that Mr Walker later helped to create in order to hide his dishonesty. A letter confirming Mr Eland had received the money was "fictitious", the court has heard.

Mr Walker, of High Road, Fobbing, Essex, and Wilfred Aquilina, 41, the former group finance director, of Suffolk Road, Barnes, London, deny two joint charges of false accounting, one of theft and one of conspiracy to falsify accounts. Mr Walker denies three additional charges of theft, and Mr Aquilina has pleaded not guilty to a further charge of false accounting. The trial continues.

## Savoy expected to drop Shepard

By Melvyn Marcus, City Editor

SPECULATION is mounting that Giles Shepard, managing director of The Savoy Hotel, has effectively been dismissed and that his departure will be announced within a matter of days, perhaps even before next Tuesday's board meeting.

Mr Shepard, who has led the Savoy's 13-year fight to prevent the Forte hotels group from gaining control, yesterday refused to comment on his position. "I am not prepared to say a word," he said.

Reports that Mr Shepard is about to lose his £150,000-a-year job come after a public clash between him and Sir Michael Richardson, a non-executive director. In the wake of a story in *The Sunday Times* last weekend, Mr Shepard issued a statement saying: "The board of the Savoy Group is dismayed that one non-executive director, for his own reasons, has decided to discuss confidential papers

with the press." Mr Shepard subsequently took responsibility for the statement and admitted that it had not been authorised by the Savoy board.

The expected exit of Mr Shepard coincides with development of more cordial relations between Rocco Forte, chairman of Forte, and the family trusts of the late Sir Hugh Wontner, the former Savoy head. After a takeover battle in the Eighties, Forte holds 68 per cent of Savoy equity, but commands only 42 per cent of votes. The Savoy's abysmal trading performance — pre-tax profits of £13 million in 1989 were replaced by a £14 million loss in 1992 — has caused mounting concern among the Wontner family trustees. Last year's modest profits of £725,000 heralded a halved dividend.

Pennington, page 25

## Unions offered Tunnel link stake

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

SIX trade unions, including the striking signal workers' union RMT, have been invited to join a consortium bidding to build the £2.7 billion Channel Tunnel rail link.

In the first approach of its kind to British unions, Hochtief, the German construction group, and its partners have offered the unions a seat on the supervisory board, provided they are willing to take an equity stake in the project.

John Edmonds, general secretary of the GMB general union, said his union was very interested in the proposal. The GMB had no objection to becoming an investor, if it could gain a stronger voice on health and safety issues, he said.

The Government has invited four consortia to bid for the right to design, build, finance and operate the high-speed rail link between London and the Tunnel. The Hochtief consortium, which includes

Siemens, the German train-builder; Nisimatsu, the Japanese construction group; Costain and Hambros, the bank, is the most foreign-dominated group in the race. But Mr Edmonds said there was no question of them trying to improve their British credentials. Rather, he said, the German companies were following a common practice in continental Europe.

Bringing the unions on board could help the consortium to avoid labour conflicts during construction and operation. The consortium has approached three construction unions: UCATT, the GMB and the TGWU. Invitations have also gone to the RMT, Aslef, the train drivers' union, and the Transport Salaried Staff Association. Mr Edmonds said. In exchange for collaboration, the consortium could guarantee the unions the right to represent their workers. But Mr Edmonds said the biggest

prize lay in the opportunity to shape the way the project was run. "If we have representation on the supervisory board we can influence the management structure and the safety and training arrangements as they are set up," he said. His union could be ready to put up several hundred thousand pounds. But he said: "It is the symbolic aspect that we are interested in."

Trade union leaders are calling on the European Commission to ban state aid for oil rig yards. They claim Britain's eight yards are being driven out of business by subsidies paid by governments and local communities elsewhere in Europe. They say the UK Government must secure a ban on subsidies or match the foreign aid.

Pennington, page 25

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## D-day for Tyneside rescue

By Ross Tieman

THE survival of an independent ship design and building capacity on Tyneside will be decided today. Ed James and Gordon Horsfield, of Price Waterhouse, the administrative receivers to Swan Hunter, will announce whether they have reached a deal to preserve the nucleus of the company's 100-strong design team.

Talks continued last night between the receivers and Soffia/CMN to settle terms for the French shipbuilding consortium to take over Swan's Hebburn dry dock, its ship designs and its key designers. Should they fail today, the receivers have said they will make the designers redundant, ending any hope of bidding for new contracts.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defence yesterday denied trade union claims, based on a letter from the German shipyard Bremer Vulkan, that the ministry had warned off potential bidders for the yard in January. In a letter yesterday to Neville Trotter, the Conservative MP for Tyneside, Roger Freeman, the defence procurement minister, said the Government had agreed to "essential elements" of assurances sought by CMN's solicitors. Soffia/CMN ditched plans to buy the entire Swan Hunter business on Monday.

## Glaxo shakes City with £115m investment loss

By Sarah Bagnall

GLAXO, the pharmaceutical company, yesterday stunned the City with news that it lost a larger than expected £115 million when bond markets slumped earlier this year. The capital loss cut investment income to £21 million in the year to June 30 and has forced Glaxo to adopt a "more prudent" fund management strategy.

The company has liquidated the £1.7 billion bond portfolio managed in Bermuda and closed down the 12-man operation. Glaxo will now manage £2.1 billion of its £2.5 billion gross investment portfolio from the UK, investing the funds in a mixture of bank deposits and gilts spread evenly over maturities ranging from three to 24 months.

John Coombe, the finance director, said: "It will be managed fairly mechanically, leaving no room for judgment. Whereas before it was actively managed in Bermuda, it will now be passively managed in the UK."

The news of the larger than expected capital loss came as Sir Richard Sykes, chief executive, announced a 10 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £1.94 billion in the year to the end of June. The company lifted the final dividend 3p to 18p, making a total of 27p, up 5p. Earnings per share rose from 39.9p to 42.9p.

The City had forecast profits ranging from £1.88 billion to £1.94 billion and a dividend of 27p. The shares fell 8p to 608p.

At constant exchange rates,



Zantac, Glaxo's best selling product, increased sales 7 per cent to £2.4 billion

sales of Glaxo's best-selling product, Zantac, the anti-ulcer drug, rose 7 per cent to £2.4 billion, out of total group sales of £5.7 billion. Zantac, with the company's four other lead products, accounts for 70 per cent of group sales. Sales grew 15 per cent, of which four percentage points were due to

exchange rate movements, with the balance the result of volume gains.

Sir Richard said that, at constant exchange rates, US sales rose 15 per cent to £2.5 billion. This reflected Glaxo's strong relationship with pharmacy benefit managers, many of which, in recent weeks,

have been bought by rival drug companies.

Glaxo has looked at buying a pharmacy benefit manager but decided not to, he said. "Buying a PBM was appropriate for other companies. But it wasn't for Glaxo."

Tempos, pge 26

## FA penalty takes toll of profits at Tottenham

By Rodney Hobson

A £15 million fine by the Football Association, a heavy tax bill and a loss in the transfer market depressed results at Tottenham Hotspur in the year to May 31. The directors, who hold 53 per cent of the shares, are waiving their right to the 1p dividend.

Pre-tax profits fell from £3.4 million to £885,000 and earnings per share from 19.1p to 3.7p. Alan Sugar, chairman, said that, while profits looked "very disappointing" compared with last year, shareholders should note the provisions of £1.8 million made up mainly of "the outrageous fine" imposed by the FA on July 6, the costs of the FA commission and appeal hearing and tax payable as a result of its inquiry into past events. The previous year's exceptional charges were £1.15 million.

The loss in the transfer market, including amortisation of the value of players, was £656,000 against a profit of £1.8 million in 1993, when Paul Gascoigne was sold.

Mr Sugar said: "I would hope that we have seen the last of any substantial exceptional charges. I am satisfied that the underlying business is doing well and that these are quality results in the circumstances."

Directors decided to pay a token dividend to retain trustee status. The 1993 dividend was 5p.

## Earnings trebled at Royal Doulton

AN UPTURN in the fine china market in Britain, the first in four years, helped Royal Doulton to increase interim profits more than threefold. The company, which was demerged from Pearson, the conglomerate, last year, saw operating profits before demerger costs rise to £4.2 million, from £1.3 million, in the six months to June 30. When demerger costs are taken into account, the group turned a pre-tax loss of £3.8 million into a £2.6 million profit.

Turnover rose by 4 per cent to £101 million. Excluding exchange rate movements, sales were up by 5 per cent. Stuart Lyons, chief executive, said the bulk of the increase came from higher volumes rather than price increases, which were still difficult to achieve. Mr Lyons said the UK market, which accounts for about 51 per cent of sales, had improved sharply. The interim dividend is 1.75p, compared with a notional payout of 1.65p last year.

## Bid costs C&G £4.2m

CHELTEMHAM & Gloucester Building Society, which yesterday announced a 44.5 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits to £108.8 million, has revealed that the proposed takeover by Lloyds Bank has so far cost £4.2 million. Of this, £1.2 million was for two mailings to members and adjustments to computer systems. The remainder was accounted for by advisers' fees and costs incurred by the Building Societies Commission in the takeover court case this summer. Mortgage loans were up almost 30 per cent at £15 billion. Bad debt provisions were £23.5 million (£63.6 million).

## Newman Tonks ahead

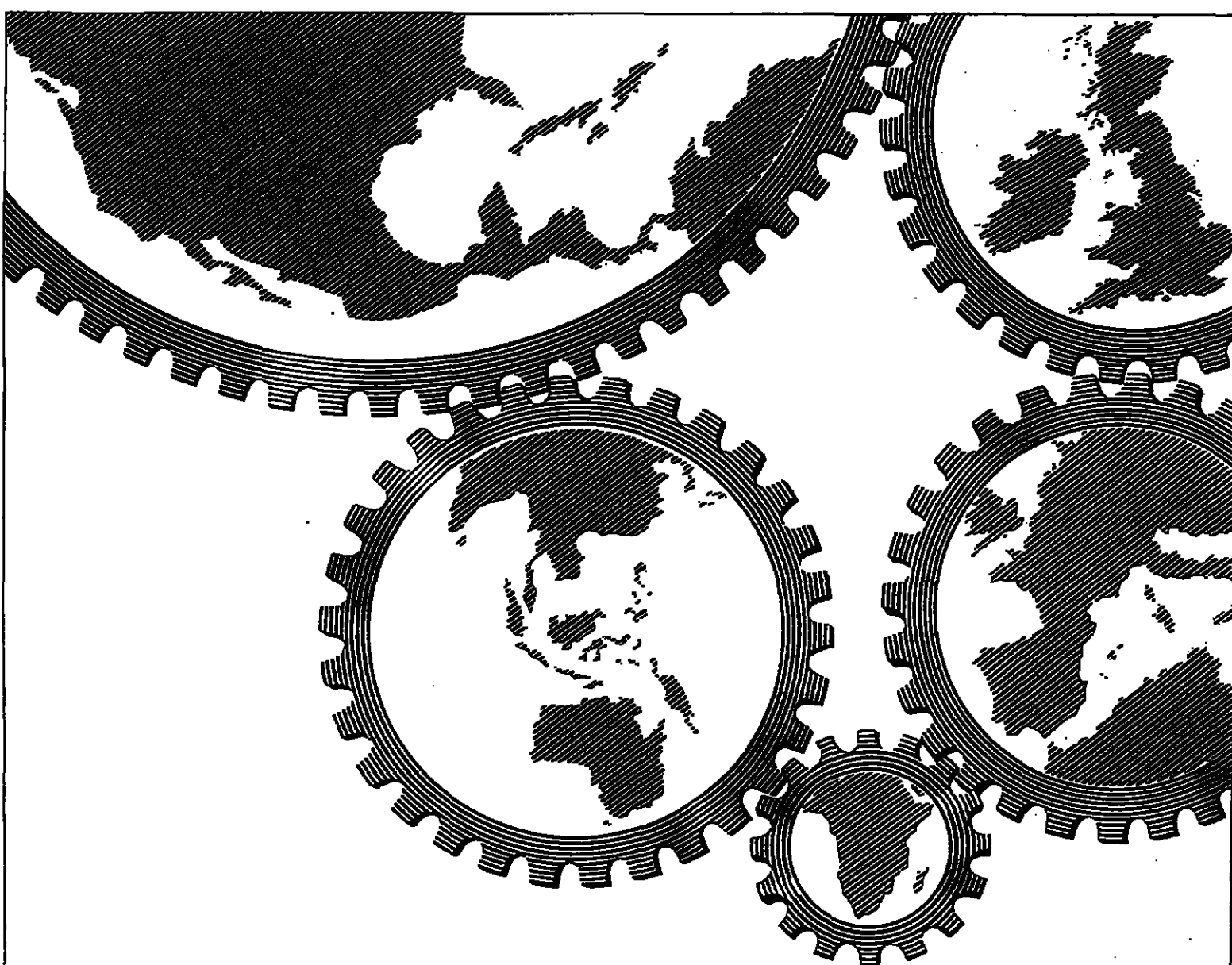
NEWMAN Tonks, the building materials and ironmongery group, benefited from a strong upturn in its American operations which helped to lift group pre-tax profits to £9.7 million before tax in the half-year to June 30, from £8.1 million previously. America, where the company has interests in contract hardware and timber, produced a 50 per cent rise in profits on turnover up 10 per cent. Earnings rose 35 per cent to 5.04p a share (£3.73p), but the interim dividend is lifted 9 per cent to 2.75p a share (£2.53p), with Doug Rogers, chairman, stressing the need to rebuild dividend cover.

## Cookson profit warning

COOKSON, the building materials group, says that second-half profits will be materially affected by costs of launching a ceramics joint venture with Johnson Matthey. Cookson yesterday reported a 46 per cent rise in profits, before exceptional charges, to £53.8 million, in the half-year to June 30. A £49.4 million write-off on selling the lead fabrication business cut profits to £3.6 million, against £42.4 million last time. The interim dividend rises to 3.2p, from 3p. Like-for-like sales rose by 12 per cent. The shares gained 6p, to 258p.

## Church steps up 53%

A STRONG performance from its British retail operations helped to lift profits at Church & Co, the shoe manufacturer, 53 per cent. Pre-tax profits rose to £864,000, from £565,000, in the half-year to June 30, on turnover up 5 per cent to £34.7 million, from £33.1 million. John Church, chairman, said that the improvement was driven by A Jones & Sons, the subsidiary operating Church stores and Jones stores in Britain, where profits more than doubled. Losses were reduced in North America. The interim dividend is held at 3p.



## As universal as BTR

### 1994 INTERIM RESULTS

	30 June 1994	30 June 1993
Sales	£4,678m	£4,872m
Profit before tax	£694m	£598m
Earnings per share	12.5p	11.3p
Dividend per share		
- conventional equivalent	5.20p	4.95p
- payable as Foreign Income Dividend	6.50p	-

**BTR**

FOR YOUR COPY OF BTR'S 1994 INTERIM RESULTS WRITE TO BTR plc, SILVERTOWN HOUSE, VINCENT SQUARE, LONDON SW1P 2PL. TELEPHONE: 071-834 3848

## SUN ALLIANCE GROUP PLC

# 1994

### INTERIM RESULTS

## STRONG IMPROVEMENT

"Our results continue to show a strong improvement with all our major operating subsidiaries contributing to profits. We achieved a satisfactory underwriting profit in the UK and made good progress in our general business elsewhere. There were increased life profits both in the UK and overseas. Our results confirm the strength of our financial position. In these circumstances the Board have decided to increase the interim dividend."

ROGER TAYLOR,  
GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Profit before taxation £180.2m (1993; £61.7m).

Shareholders' net assets at 30th June 1994 £1,728m (31st December 1993; £2,012m).

Solvency margin including minority interests 56% (31st December 1993; 64%).

The interim dividend is to be increased to 5.5p (1993; 5.25p).

THE HALF-YEARLY REPORT CONSISTING OF THE INTERIM RESULTS TOGETHER WITH THE DECLARATION OF DIVIDEND AND THE GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMENTARY IS BEING POSTED TO SHAREHOLDERS.

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bury shrug



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□ Rail link between 'us' and 'them' □ Shoppers stay at home □ Enterprise counts the cost of a lost war

## An unholy union

□ CLASS war couldn't last for ever. Employee share schemes, rising prosperity and a barrage of anti-union legislation have already rolled back the frontiers of socialism. But yesterday, a curious new concept emerged: union capitalism.

John Edmunds, boss of the GMB general union, could scarcely contain his delight at being invited to join a consortium bidding to build the fast rail link from London to the Channel Tunnel. At a meeting in a Blackpool hotel, representatives of a German-led group suggested that six trade unions might like to become equity partners in the project.

An everyday event on the continent, Mr Edmunds suggested, but a bit of a novelty in Britain, where the concept of "social partnership" between employer and employee has hardly progressed further in most companies than a merger of the staff canteen and the executive dining room.

After 15 years in the political wilderness, Britain's union bosses are desperate to be taken seriously. They want their views to count, even if it is only in the workplace. Now they are being offered a chance to buy influence and a board-room seat.

But why should Hochstetler and his partners offer union power at a discount to other shareholders?

Altruism? Unlikely. They must believe they can do a better job, at a better price, with the unions on board.

This may sound outlandish to British companies, who have grown up with "us and them" engravings on their corporate hearts. But a shop steward who has had a hand in shaping safety arrangements may be less likely to challenge them. A union chief with a financial stake in a project may be less likely to call his members out on strike. "No comrades, we cannot just walk out. Just think of what it would do to the dividends" rings the cry from tomorrow's shop floor.

There will inevitably be a conflict of interest if unions tread this path, but that will be for future union leaders to wrestle with.

Financial arm-twisting aside, a deal also has attractions for the unions. It may help them protect their members better against accidents. It certainly guarantees them representation.

And in the construction industry, where union organisation has been pretty fragmented lately, that is a valuable prize. At its peak, the project will

employ 10,000 workers. If each belonged to a union, charging the GMB's annual subscription of £72, that would add £720,000 a year to union revenues. Not a bad return on a modest few hundred thousand pounds of equity. Nice work for members too, if the union can provide it.

For Hochstetler and his partners, the potential gains are much greater. In a heavily-gear project, with high capital costs, dispute-free construction and operation could make the difference between profit and loss.

Equity partnership or social partnership? No, that's plain capitalism for you.

### Who's minding the store?

□ THE British consumer has become a rare and timid creature. After the "shop till you drop" excesses of the Eighties, even the merest hint of a rate rise is enough to send shoppers scurrying away from the high street, leaving stock rooms full of unsold goods.

The distributive trade survey



from the Confederation of British Industry is always an amusing document because it compares hopes with grim reality. Last month, retailers were waiting for a crowd that never came. Their forecast of a 23 per cent rise in sales was answered by an increase of only 2 per cent. Given past evidence, that suggests next week's official retail sales statistics will actually show a fall.

This might bring a wry smile to Eddie George's face, since on preliminary evidence he has managed to stifle any chance of the economy overheating, merely by wringing his brow. The summer-long hints that the Bank of England was keen to raise interest rates may have been all that was needed for consumers

to defer expenditure. Most people still feel too insecure about their jobs to load up their credit cards.

Indeed, last month's desertion of the high street should help to keep the economy on course for the rest of the autumn. Stores have little choice but to offload their excess goods with renewed sales. Those in turn should help depress the retail price index when the men and women from the ministry next venture into the shopping centres with their clipboards.

It should also help to continue the run of positive news on the trade front. Yesterday's trade figures raised the prospect of the manufacturing-led recovery the Treasury has dreamed about, with exports rising and imports flat. Even when the erratic items that always cloud the trade figures are excluded, the underlying average figure is still running well below last year's. If the high street has become the place to avoid, then fewer Korean televisions and Chinese mountain bicycles will be landing at Tilbury.

Unless the data takes a nasty

turn for the worse, Ken and Eddie might even allow themselves a small sherry when they meet at the end of the month.

### A future enterprise

□ ANOTHER deal, another dollar, would have been the reaction of the scores of merchant bankers, lawyers and spin-doctors when they presented their bills to Enterprise Oil. Having flattered and fawned over the company as it lurched around trying to net the once-hapless Lismo, they undoubtedly felt they deserved their fat fees.

For Enterprise, the costs of the lost war are higher than the £5.7 million it has paid to the hired band of mercenaries. It has lost cash which could have been spent buying reserves and much of the goodwill it had collected in the City over the years.

It becomes easy to forget that Enterprise Oil is actually a good company and proved it yesterday by driving down costs and improving its operating result — before the Lismo black holes —

despite a sharp drop in the oil price. Yesterday's small rise in the shares suggest the market is looking at Enterprise afresh and ask where it can go from here.

Enterprise's first job is to hire a non-executive chairman. It then needs to replace the oil it is pumping out of the North Sea and cover its dividend with earnings. To achieve the last two without a dividend cut requires a deal, and without Lismo the company is faced with looking for second best. The oil exploration sector is crowded with badly-performing companies and sooner or later Enterprise will pick up some reserves with an agreed bid. Investors will regret that the ideal candidate, Lismo, was not courted with merger terms but it is not inconceivable that a deal could yet be done.

### Magic cocktail

□ THE demise of Giles Shepard was perhaps inevitable, given the Savoy's lamentable profit record. That said, the presence of the impeccably attired Shepard, complete with pearl tie-pin, will be missed. One supporter writes: "He is not a diplomat but if he goes, so also will that magic cocktail of union and disdain which only he knows how to dispense to maintain the qualities of a superb hotel."

## Shares slide after BTR warns of price pressure

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR

SHARES in BTR, the industrial conglomerate and one of Britain's biggest corporations, tumbled 44p, to 338p, on City disappointment at its interim figures, which were accompanied by a warning that pricing pressures could hit second-half results.

Pre-tax profits rose by 16 per cent, to £694 million, in the first half of this year. However, included in the figure was a £96 million contribution from the disposal of discontinued operations.

Sales from continuing operations were 11 per cent up at £4.5 billion, but the rise in profits from those operations was just 7.5 per cent, to £684 million. There was some disappointment, too, at the dividend. BTR is paying an interim of 5.2p, up from 4.95p; the market had expected per-

haps 5.4p. The payout will be in the form of a foreign income dividend, as introduced in this year's Finance Act. This is tax-efficient for the company and for some investors.

Norman Ireland, the chairman, said it was not expected that the final payment would include an FID element. The half-year payment is out of earnings per share that increased by 11 per cent, to 12.5p.

Mr Ireland said some of the group's companies were enjoying increased orders and sales, but overcapacity in many markets, such as polymers and automotive parts, and consequent price pressures, meant that BTR's operating profits were not in line with sales advances.

Those price pressures, together with higher raw material costs, would "continue to

make the improvement of margins difficult to obtain in 1994".

Alan Jackson, BTR's chief executive, said part of the lag between sales and profits resulted from the non-repetition of a baggage handling contract for Denver airport that was in for the full first half last year. That had meant a £30 million reduction in operating profits this time.

As a result, operating margins that would, without this one-off factor, have been more than 16 per cent in the first half, fell from 15.7 to 15.2 per cent, he added.

The figures were sufficient to persuade several securities houses to downgrade their estimates for the current year or to issue sell notices.

Tempus, page 26

## Cadbury shrugs off cola wars



And all because... prospects cheer Dominic Cadbury

CADBURY Schweppes yesterday sought to reassure a nervous City that it had been unaffected by the cola wars as it unveiled a 23 per cent rise in profits in the first half (Susan Gilchrist writes).

David Wellings, chief executive, said the soft drinks market in Britain had been difficult, with intense price and space competition from supermarkets' own-label brands, in particular J Sainsbury's new Classic Cola which was launched this year. However, he insisted that the effect on the group as a whole had been exaggerated.

Coca-Cola & Schweppes Beverages, the group's soft drinks business in Britain, enjoyed increased volumes but suffered a 4 per cent drop in sales over price pressures.

Group pre-tax profits rose to £204.8 million (£166.2 million) in the six months to June 18 on sales up 3.5 per cent at £1.77 billion (£1.71 billion).

Dominic Cadbury, chairman, said the best summer in Britain and Europe had boosted soft drink sales at the start of the second half. He was confident of a good result for the full year. The interim dividend is 4.6p (3.6p), a rise of 28 per cent, reflecting a re-balancing between the interim and final payout.

Tempus, page 26

## Failed Lismo bid cost £24m

By CARL MORTIMER

THE failure of Enterprise Oil's bitter bid for Lismo, the rival exploration company, cost £24 million, the group revealed yesterday. The oil company's net profit for the half year plunged from £80.1 million to £8.5 million after an £18 million write-down on its Lismo stake. £5.7 million bid costs and a higher tax charge.

Enterprise has cut the carrying value of a 9.8 per cent Lismo stake to 150p per share.

Andrew Shilton, finance director, said the 169p price at which they were bought, reflected a premium for control

while 150p represented the bottom of their trading range. "Our mind set is that it is a trade investment and we have no plans to sell at the moment," Enterprise paid cash for the shares in a controversial move that angered some shareholders in the last days of its paper offer for Lismo.

Shares in Enterprise rose 9p to 400p after good production news and confirmation that the interim dividend is to be maintained at 6.5p in spite of a fall in per share earnings from 15.8p to 5.2p, excluding the effects of the Lismo write-off.

Production from the new Scott and Nelson platforms in the North Sea helped Enterprise to increase turnover from £289 million to £299 million in the six months to June 30, in spite of a fall in average oil prices from £12.40 to £10.10 per barrel.

Cost reductions from more efficient production and lower exploration costs helped to increase profits at the operating level from £66 million to £68 million in the half year.

## Arjo lifted by economic upturn

ARJO Wiggins Appleton, the Anglo-French paper group, boosted its net profit 127 per cent to £66 million in the first half, well above market forecasts, as economic recovery lifted demand and allowed price rises in Europe.

Profits before tax in the first half were 67 per cent higher at £105 million after exceptional costs for restructur-

ing. Operating profits were almost 37 per cent ahead at £122 million. Sales were £1.44 billion (£1.433 billion).

The company's earnings per share of 8.1p were 50 per cent higher than last time, after exceptional restructuring costs. In spite of the clear improvement, the interim dividend was unchanged at 2.65p.

## Charge hits Blue Circle profit

A SURGE in cement sales coupled with a price increase helped Blue Circle Industries to raise profits before exceptional items in the first half from £60 million to £88 million, but disappointment over Blue Circle's performance in home products — marginally up at £24.5 million — hit the shares, which fell 14p to 300p.

Pre-tax profits fell from £60 million to £48 million, after a £40 million exceptional charge. This included a £35 million goodwill write-off and £9 million loss from the sale of the New World cookers business. The company is maintaining the interim dividend at last year's level of 3.75p.

Tempus, page 26

## BRITISH GAS PLC 1994 SECOND QUARTER RESULTS.

### CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT:

The financial performance continued to reflect trading and regulatory pressures, partially offset by lower interest charges. Profits after taxation for the half year fell by £18 million to £485 million. Operating profits were £22 million lower at £930 million, despite colder weather which benefited the current year by £114 million compared with 1993.

The reduction in operating profit was attributable to the continuing fall in market share in the contract sector and lower margins in the tariff sector of the UK gas supply business. Sharply lower oil prices and a reduction in the volume of gas sold to the UK gas supply business caused reduced profits in our Exploration and Production business.

The major restructuring of the UK Gas Business is progressing to schedule and manpower in that business has fallen by nearly 3000 in the first half of 1994. The restructuring is a major element in our plans for continuing to cut controllable costs and the benefits will be felt in future years.

We have made two significant disposals in Canada. The sale of the 85 per cent shareholding in The Consumers' Gas Company Ltd. was completed on 30 June 1994, with net proceeds amounting to £609 million. Since related Canadian interests have also been sold, the overseas gas supply business segment is now reported as a discontinued activity in the Group Profit and Loss Account.

On 11 August 1994 the Company's 53 per cent shareholding in Bow Valley Energy Inc. of Calgary, Canada was sold to Talisman Energy Inc. for a mixture of cash and shares. The Talisman shares were subsequently sold and the aggregate proceeds amounted to £353 million. This transaction will be accounted for in the third quarter.

The sums realised from these disposals and the elimination of related debt from the Group Balance Sheet will reduce net borrowings by £1.8 billion, of which £1.3 billion has been accounted for in the second quarter.

On the regulatory front, the Company has had a busy period, with three consultative documents being issued by the regulatory authorities covering the introduction of competition, the price formula for Transportation and Storage, and the removal of schedules in the non-domestic market.

The consultation period for the pricing proposals for Transportation and Storage has now been completed, and Ofgas has confirmed the original proposals. The price formula is tough, but we intend to get on with the task of delivering an acceptable return to shareholders while maintaining a safe and viable pipeline system. A further consultative document is awaited, dealing with the basis for the required separation of the Transportation and Storage business from the remainder of the UK gas supply business.

The consultative document covering the non-domestic market has led to Ofgas suspending the requirement for the Company to publish price schedules in the firm contract gas market above 25000 therms for an interim period from 1 October 1994. Our competitors currently hold 84% of this market. We welcome this step and look forward to the early removal of other regulatory constraints in this market.

The consultation period on the joint proposals by Ofgas and the Government on competition in the domestic market is now over, but the Company has not yet had any indication of the Government's intentions. It is hoped that a decision will be taken soon to implement the competition proposals on a basis which is equitable between all suppliers, and in a manner which protects the interests of our shareholders from the adverse effects of unfair competition, and which continues to maintain high standards of service and safety for our customers.

### DIVIDEND

The Board has declared a maintained interim dividend of 6.4 pence per ordinary share.

R V Jordan

ROBERT V JORDAN CHAIRMAN  
1 SEPTEMBER 1994

The interim dividend of 6.4 pence per ordinary share will be paid on 14 December 1994 to shareholders on the UK register at the close of business on 3 November 1994. Copies of the 1994 Second Quarter Results are available from British Gas plc, Longway Business Department, 200000 Home, 122 Grosvenor Road, London SW1V 3JL. Telephone 071 421 1444.

	BRITISH GAS PLC 1994 SECOND QUARTER RESULTS			
	3 months ended 30 June 1994 £m	3 months ended 30 June 1993 £m	6 months ended 30 June 1994 £m	6 months ended 30 June 1993 £m
Turnover				
-continuing operations	1877	1752	5073	4925
-discontinued operations	(3)	184	869	622
Operating profit/(loss)	2063	1936	5742	5547
-continuing operations	(94)	(49)	611	829
-discontinued operations	(3)	20	119	123
Profit on sale of discontinued operations	(24)	(29)	930	952
Profit on sale of tangible fixed assets	3	-	3	-
-continuing operations	3	-	3	1
Profit/(loss) on ordinary activities	(18)	(29)	936	953
Net interest and gearing adjustment	(52)	(73)	(115)	(160)
Share of profits less losses of associated undertakings	4	11	7	14
Profit/(loss) on ordinary activities before taxation	(68)	(81)	828	807
Taxation on profit/(loss) on ordinary activities	(18)	9	(340)	(300)
Profit/(loss) on ordinary activities after taxation	(79)	(82)	488	507
Minority shareholders' interest	2	2	(5)	(4)
Profit/(loss) for the financial period	(77)	(80)	483	503
Earnings/(loss) per ordinary share-basic	(1.8)p	(1.5)p	11.2p	11.6p
Interim dividend			277	277
Interim dividend per ordinary share			6.4p	6.4p
Historical cost profit/(loss) on ordinary activities before taxation	7	(27)	973	938

1. The Group unaudited 1994 Second Quarter Results have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out in the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1993.  
2. Taxation for the 1994 Second Quarter Results has been provided on the basis of an estimated effective tax rate of 34.9% (1993 32.0%).  
3. On 30 June 1994, British Gas completed the sale of its 85% shareholding in The Consumers' Gas Company Ltd. In addition, sale agreements for other related Canadian interests have been completed with the result that discontinued operations essentially comprise the business segment reported previously as overseas gas supply in the 1993 Report and Accounts.

	ANALYSIS OF OPERATING PROFIT - (LOSS)			
	3 months ended 30 June 1994 £m	3 months ended 30 June 1993 £m	6 months ended 30 June 1994 £m	6 months ended 30 June 1993 £m
UK gas supply	(32)	(72)	850	595
Overseas gas supply	10	20	118	123
Exploration and production	5	21	136	194
Others	(7)	2	25	40
TOTAL	(24)	(29)	930	952

British Gas  
THE LEADING INTERNATIONAL GAS COMPANY



STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

# Zeneca shares leap after Glaxo tells of bid hunt

SHARES of Zeneca, floated off from ICI last year, jumped 16p to 838p as rival Glaxo indicated that it was on the look-out for suitable acquisitions. Sir Richard Sykes, Glaxo's chief executive, set the speculators' pulses racing by telling brokers at the meeting accompanying the group's interim figures that the pharmaceutical industry was fragmented and that this was an anachronism. Observers took this to mean that Glaxo has Zeneca in its sights.

Zeneca, ranked 15th among the world's pharmaceutical companies, is seen as vulnerable to a bid, as is Wellcome, up 13p at 690p. Zeneca stoked up the speculation yesterday by filing a universal shelf with the US Securities and Exchange Commission allowing it to raise up to \$750 million on New York's capital markets.

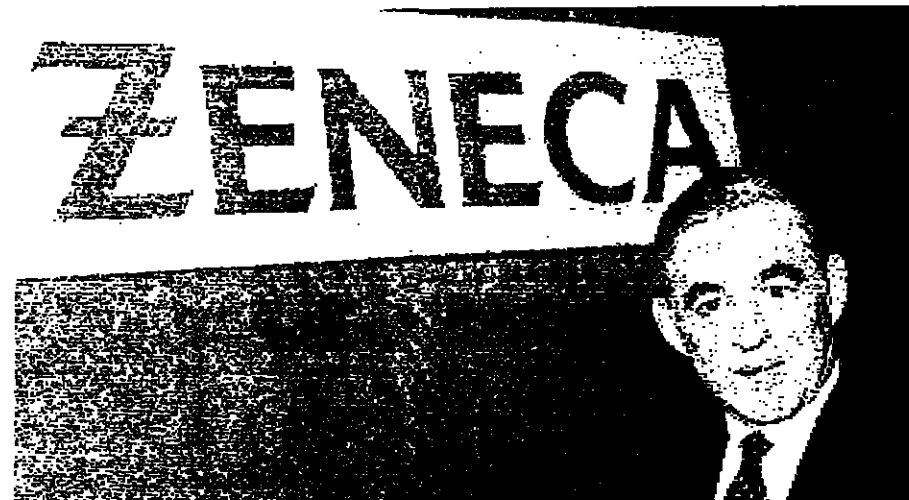
There has been a lot of recent corporate activity in the pharmaceutical industry world-wide, with SmithKline Beecham last week paying Eastman Kodak £1.8 billion for Sterling Health. Other deals are thought to be in the pipeline as drug companies attempt to form joint ventures to cut the cost of research and development.

Elsewhere, shares tumbled below 3,300 as the CBI survey for August revealed a further slow-down in consumer spending. But prices closed above their worst, supported by a firm start on Wall Street and a better performance in the bond market.

The FT-SE 100 index, down almost 38 points at one stage, closed 23.9 points lower at 3,180.0 as 668 million shares changed hands. Falls among second-liners were restricted, with the FT-SE 250 ending 17.3 points lower at 3,761.8.

Leading shares bore the brunt of the losses, with a steady stream of disappointing trading statements undermining investor confidence. The 10 per cent rise in pre-tax profits at Glaxo to £1.8 billion last year left the market unimpressed, with the price touching 602p before finishing 7p lower at 600p. The figures included a trading loss of £115 million on its investment portfolio.

BTR dropped 44p to 338p after giving warning on current trading prospects with margins under pressure. In the first half the group raised pre-tax profits 16 per cent to £694 million. Brokers such as



David Barnes, chief executive, saw Zeneca shares rise after talk of a Glaxo takeover list

Robert Fleming and Hoare Govett are believed to have moved quickly to cut their profit forecasts for the full year from £1.4 billion to £1.3 billion, with Nomura and UBS said to have turned sellers.

Blue Circle Industries was left nursing a fall of 14p at 300p after reporting a £12.4 million first-half drop in pre-tax profits to £48.3 million following exceptional charges totalling £40.3 million. But

Farnell Electronics stood out in a falling market with a rise of 2p to 563p. Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker, says the bull run in the shares has lasted five years to date and looks set to continue after a brief bout of profit-taking earlier this year. Henderson is forecasting a 32 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £61 million this year and is telling clients to buy.

Cookson Group, despite lower profits hit by exceptional items, firmed up to 258p, cheered by signs of improvement in its markets.

British Gas rose 3p to 298p after allaying City fears with a maintained interim dividend of 6.4p. There had been fears of a reduction after the tough stance taken on pricing by the regulatory authorities. Seasonally depressed second-quarter figures revealed a £4 million net loss, reduced from

£16 million. Enterprise Oil rose 13p to 400p, despite announcing a sharp drop in first-half profits after taking a hit on the cost of its abortive bid for Lasso earlier this year and a lower oil price. The group held the dividend.

Profit taking left Cadbury Schweppes 4p lower at 468p after reporting a 23 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £204.8 million at the halfway stage. Arjo Wiggins Appleton

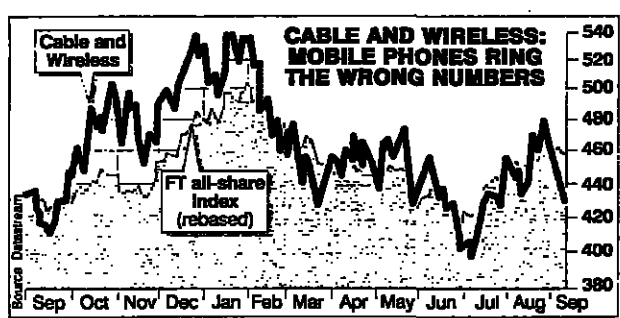
subsidiary, escalated the price war in the mobile phone market by announcing a new business tariff that undercuts BT by 25 per cent. Some

brokers fear this is a war C&W will not win as margins continue to be squeezed. Earlier this week Hoare Govett, the broker, urged clients to switch out of the shares and into BT, 2p higher at 394p after going

Examp, the publisher, lost 3½p to 414½p after announcing plans to raise £77 million from a rights issue. Radius, the USM-quoted computer systems and maintenance group, firmed a further 1p to 46p, for a two-day rise of 5p, reflecting news earlier this week that the group had returned to the black with pre-tax profits of £808,000 against a loss of £466,000.

GILT-EDGED: Gilts were cheered by overseas bond markets and the latest CBI survey. The December series of the Long Gilt climbed £27½ to close at £1017½ as 55,000 contracts were completed. In longs, benchmark Treasury 9 per cent 2012 jumped £1 to £1018½, while in shorts Treasury 9½ per cent 1999 was £193½ better at £1013½. Index-linked suffered

at £1013½. US stocks extended their rally into midday, with continued strength in the high technology sector and a firm bond market. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 16.15 points at 3,902.40. Advancing shares led declining issues about 12 to seven. Treasuries remained steady at higher levels with the long bond up 7½ to yield 7.55 per cent.



Cable and Wireless: Mobile phones ring the wrong numbers

## MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9022.40 (+16.15)
S&P Composite	472.67 (+1.68)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	19917.78 (-106.02)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10150.98 (-14.89)
Amsterdam:	
Euro Index	415.84 (+0.67)
Sydney:	
ASX	2089.1 (-15.2)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2172.37 (+4.58)
Singapore:	
SEAC	2304.23 (-22.78)
Brussels:	
General	7857.00 (-20.98)
Paris:	
CAC-40	1981.40 (+19.20)
Zurich:	
SMI	673.20 (-0.68)
London:	
FT 100	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT 250	3761.8 (-17.3)
FT-SE All-Share	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT-SE 100	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT-SE 250	3761.8 (-17.3)
FT-SE All-Share	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT-SE 100	3180.00 (-23.9)
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FT-SE All-Share	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT-SE 100	3180.00 (-23.9)
FT-SE 250	3761.8 (-17.3)
FT-SE All-Share	3180.00 (-23.9)

## RECENT ISSUES

Aromascan	96
Bell Gulf Shn Npn Wts	79 -1
Beacon Inv Trst (100)	101
Beacon Inv Trst Wts	45 -1
Chambrin Phipps (165)	166
Con't Foods Wts	11 +4
Copyright Prmits (120)	125
INVESTCO Japan Disc	90
-do Japan Disc Wts	48 +4
JF Fledge Japan Wts	64
Magnum Power	56 +14
Orbit (23)	29
Panther Wts	17
Petroleum	28 -7
Pillar Property Inv (150)	159 -2
Suter Wts 99/04	39
TR Euro Gwth Prg (100)	105
Tops Estates Wts	29 -1

## HIGHLY ISSUES

Raglan Props n/p (32)	14
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## MAJOR CHANGES

RISER:	
Maed Martin A'	675p (+20p)
Unidare	300p (+10p)
VSEL	935p (+17p)
Wellcome	686p (+13p)
Zeneca	838p (+16p)
Church	500p (+15p)
Assoc Brit Foods	564p (+10p)
FALLS:	
Bayside	589p (-10p)
Lloyds	570p (-11p)
Blue Circle	300p (-14p)
J Laing	269p (-21p)
Vesper Thory	729p (-10p)
Wolsley	789p (-14p)
Delta	503p (-13p)
BTR	338p (-44p)
Canadair	229p (-13p)
Hall Eng	165p (-14p)
Hepworth	316p (-12p)
Photo-Mo	270p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 31

## TEMPUS

### Great expectations

A COMPANY would normally have to fail dismally for the City to wipe £1.6 billion off its market value in a single day. The market has, however, come to expect so much from BTR that an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits is simply not enough to satisfy it.

Not only was BTR's overall performance well below some City forecasts, but there were too many warts in the details. The fall in operating margins, from 15.7 per cent to 15.2 per cent, was perhaps the biggest shock. Until now, BTR's margins, founded on niche businesses with dominant market shares, have always seemed inviolable. Now, just as the economic recovery should be supporting prices, BTR is coming under pressure from rising raw material costs.

The lack of growth at operating level was another factor that counted against the group.

After stripping out the £98 million gain from disposals, profits advanced by only 1.6 per cent, more slowly than the rate of inflation, in spite of inclusion of the Remond acquisition.

Even BTR's offering of a foreign income dividend failed to placate investors, since the underlying rise was only 5 per cent.

In spite of all the negative factors, BTR has some justification in pleading not guilty. Its industrial division, which feels the effect of recovery early, is performing strongly. Strong cash flow and proceeds from recent disposals have already absorbed the cost of Remond, and, with gearing at 46 per cent, the group is well placed for another acquisition. However, over-optimistic current forecasts may be, the shares trade on 15 times last year's earnings. That may not be a floor, however, since the market treats its fallen idols harshly.

## Glaxo

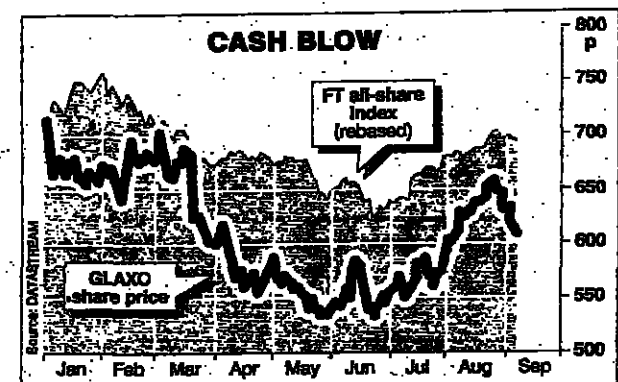
FULL disclosure of Glaxo's losses from its exotic fund management operation in Bermuda does not end the embarrassing questions over what the company should be doing with £2.2 billion of cash. It takes little genius to work out that investors buy shares in drug companies for higher returns than their bank deposits. Having failed at playing hardball in the financial markets, Glaxo needs a more profitable home for the money pouring in from Zantac sales.

The strength of Glaxo's drug sales, which generated more than £1 billion in cash flow, after tax and dividends, ought to give a clue as to what the company should be doing with its cash. So far, it has remained aloof from the American takeover craze that has gripped its rivals in the

drugs business, and yesterday's results suggest that it has been right not to move downstream into distribution. Glaxo managed to increase US dollar sales by 15 per cent without the help of a pharmacy benefit manager under its own roof.

The next move is likely to be sideways. The market recognised the logic with a sharp

rise in Wellcome and Zeneca shares. A takeover of either would be dilutive in the short term, but the market would stomach that for the promise of a world-beating research-based pharmaceuticals group. Doubtless, Glaxo has other irons in the fire, but cranking up the dividend is not enough when the cash pile grows at such a pace.



## Cadbury Schweppes

IF Cadbury Schweppes wanted to convince the City that it had little to fear from the cola wars, then a 23 per cent rise in pre-tax profits was a good way of doing it.

Although the group's soft drinks business in the UK felt the squeeze from increased competition from supermarkets' own-label brands, the overall impact on Cadbury was negligible. Sixty per cent of the group's soft drinks sales are outside the UK, and drinks account for less than 60 per cent of the group's total turnover, in any case. Confectionery retailing is still highly fragmented in Britain, making Cadbury's less vulnerable to the leading UK retailers than almost any other company in the food manufacturing sector, a fact reflected in its premium rating. The rise in group margins increased from 10 per cent to 12 per cent. When most other

food producers are squeezing prices to maintain sales volume, this goes some way to justifying the market's faith.

News on Dr Pepper was less encouraging. Cadbury's failure, so far, to get a boardroom seat raises the question of how the group can benefit from its stake. Cadbury seems happy to play a waiting game and points to capital growth in Dr Pepper's share price as some consolation. That will be small comfort to shareholders who invested in Cadbury as a branded food and drink business, not an investment trust.

The shares should recover some price after these results, but their full potential is unlikely to be realised until the Dr Pepper saga is resolved.

## Blue Circle

IF Blue Circle just made cement, the company would be a raging buy, but the temptation to diversify from highly cyclical commodity building products led it into curious

areas. Much of the dross has been sold, including New World, the cooker company, but Blue Circle is still locked into the housing sector with Porttorens heaters and the bathroom business.

The cement story is expected to grow in strength, with America picking up strongly in the second half. While profits grew stateside in the first six months, Blue Circle failed to pick up volume growth from the rise in US demand because of bad weather in the North East, the centre of its operations.

But Blue Circle's strategy in home products remains unconvincing. The group does not have enough clout in the building market to resist margin pressures and its return on sales fell in the first half. Blue Circle is in too deep with home products to come out easily, but it needs more than the current lacklustre housing market to justify its investment.

EDITED BY NEIL BENNETT

## COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE				ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES			
COMMODITY EXCHANGE				CRUDE OILS &/barrel FOB				WHEAT		BARLEY	
COCOA								Basis 1/8		Basis 1/8	
Sep	994-995	Oct	1078-1070	Brent 15 day Sep	16.05	16.10	Sep	106.05	Sep	103.70	
Dec	1063-994	Mar	1095-1085	Brent 15 day Oct	16.05	16.10	Nov	107.00	Nov	104.85	
Mar	1010-1015	May	1110-1100	Brent 15 day Nov	16.05	16.10	Mar	108.50	Mar	106.85	
May	1013-1012	Jul	1113-1112	WT Texas Intermediate (Nov)	17.80	17.85	Nov	111.05	Nov	108.85	
Jul	1020-1015	Oct	1115-1110				Mar	111.05	Mar	108.85	
Oct	1026-1016	Volume	4950				Volume	552	Volume	125	
ROBUSTA COFFEE (C)				PRODUCTS (\$/MT)				POTATO (t)			
Dec	400-4030	May	3740-3730	Spot CIF NW Europe (gross delivery)			Nov	22.0	Open	Close	
Mar	370-370	Jul	3720-3720	Spot CIF US \$5 B. (US price)	156 (+1)	156 (+1)	Nov	22.0	22.0	22.0	
May	370-370	Sep	3720-3720	Gasoil (LCC)	156 (+1)	156 (+1)	Apr	22.5	22.5	22.5	
Jul	383-3840	Volume	3720-3720	Nov EEC LCC (Oct)	157 (+1)	157 (+1)	Mar	22.5	22.5	22.5	
Oct	38-3740			WT Texas Intermediate (Nov)	17.80	17.85	Volume	296			
WHITE SUGAR (B)				3.5 Fuel Oil							
Resters	327	327	4-26.2	Naphtha	161 (+1)	162 (+1)	RUBBER (No 1 RSS Gt p/b)				
Sept 24-90	Aug.	327.0-24.5		IPE FUTURES (GNI LOR)				GNI LOR 73.25-73.75			
Oct	298-298.7	Oct	327.0-24.5	Sep	150.20-50.59	Dec 150.50-58.75	BIFERR (GNI LOR)				
Dec	326-327	Mar	311.5-27.0	Oct	152.75-54.00	Jan 150.50-59.75	Oct 94	High	Low	Close	
Mar	327-327.0	Volume	2840	Nov	150.50-56.75	Feb 150.50-59.75	Oct 94	154.5	154.0	153.5	
MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION				BENT 6.00pm				Oct 94	154.5	154.0	153.5
Average futures prices at representative markets on September 7				Oct 16-16.45				Oct 94	154.5	154.0	153.5
100 lbs/kg	75	16	116.08	Nov 16-16.45	Nov 16-16.45	Nov 16-16.45	Nov 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
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100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	Dec 16-16.45	154.5	154.0	153.5	
100 lbs/kg	75	16	88.25	Dec 16-16.45							



# Small will not be beautiful for the unwary investor

The USM is due to go in 1996. Its replacement will be a much riskier proposition, says Philip Pangalos

Private investors should be under no illusion that the Stock Exchange's plan, unveiled this week, for a less regulated market for smaller and growing companies is a replacement for the Unlisted Securities Market.

At present, the USM is the second-tier market but is due to close in 1996 and will stop taking new entrants this year. The proposed Alternative Investment Market is for fledgling companies seeking to raise capital, and was initially welcomed by the City and industry. Caveat emptor, however, should be investors' watchword.

Fears are being voiced that cheap will not always be cheerful. The profile of the new market will be higher-risk because some companies will be younger and the potential failure rate will be higher.

The Square Mile was relieved that a seemingly sensible balance had been achieved between entry requirements, regulation and costs as the Stock Exchange attempted to provide lower-cost information for investors through a new market.

The new market, which will eventually take in companies listed under the present matched-bargain Rule 4.2, will certainly be riskier, as the level of information required is lower, though each company will have to carry a health warning.

The Official List caters for companies with a minimum capitalisation of £700,000 and a three-year trading record, willing to trade at least 25 per cent of their equity. But the cost of entry often excludes fledgling companies.

Key elements of the new market are:

- Entry will be based on a prospectus or similar document that meets European Union directives. Companies will need to provide audited accounts.

- The market will be available to as wide a range of companies as possible, with no restrictions on market capitalisation, length of trading record or the percentage of the equity in the hands of the public.

- Sponsorship will be optional. Companies must arrange for a member firm to support trading but any further involvement by member firms will be a matter of agreement with individual companies.

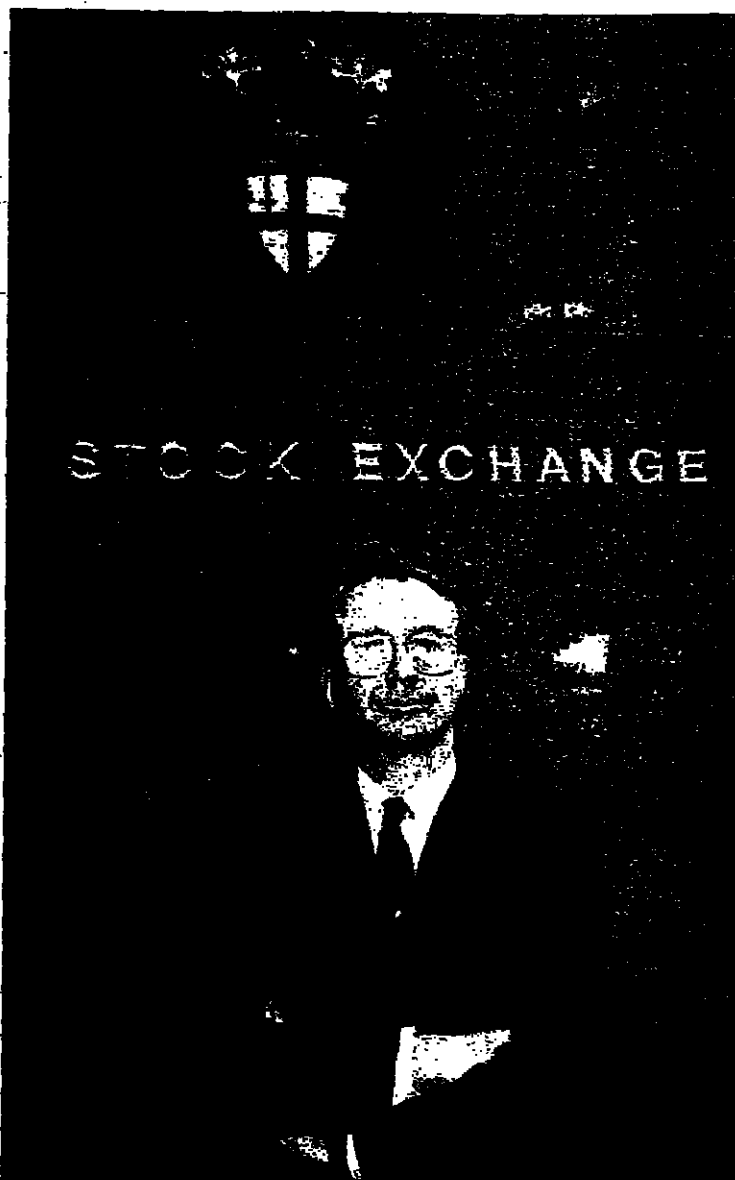
- A company's directors will be responsible for the accuracy of their documents and will not be allowed to sell their shares for two years.

- Companies must meet certain continuing obligations, including publication of unaudited interim figures and of all directors' dealings.

- Companies must publish price-sensitive information promptly. The exchange will log all announcements through its Regulatory News Service.

- Trading on the new market will be subject to the same level of surveillance and supervision as that of companies on the Official List.

The exchange has sent its consulta-



Michael Lawrence advocates a relaxed regime for small companies

tive document to interested parties, including member firms, advisers, smaller companies, regulatory bodies and venture capitalists. Applications for the new market can be lodged at the start of 1995 and trading will begin next June.

Michael Lawrence, the Stock Exchange's chief executive, said: "Companies' financing needs differ. While the Official List provides access to capital, it does require a company's management to allow significant outside shareholdings and to accept the obligations that go with that degree of public interest. It is questionable whether a level of regulation applied to Britain's biggest companies is appropriate for the totality of companies seeking to have their shares traded."

"The proposed new market, with less stringent regulation, is designed to provide an alternative source of capital and a trading platform for companies which are unable to join the List for a variety of reasons. The key is to find the appropriate level of regulation necessary to attract investors who are prepared to accept a higher level of risk."

Mr Lawrence added: "Although entry documentation will be kept as simple as possible, potential entrants to the Alternative Investment Market must provide a prospectus, meet all the audit requirements laid out in company law and maintain certain on-going obligations."

Howard Davies, the director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, said: "The success of small-

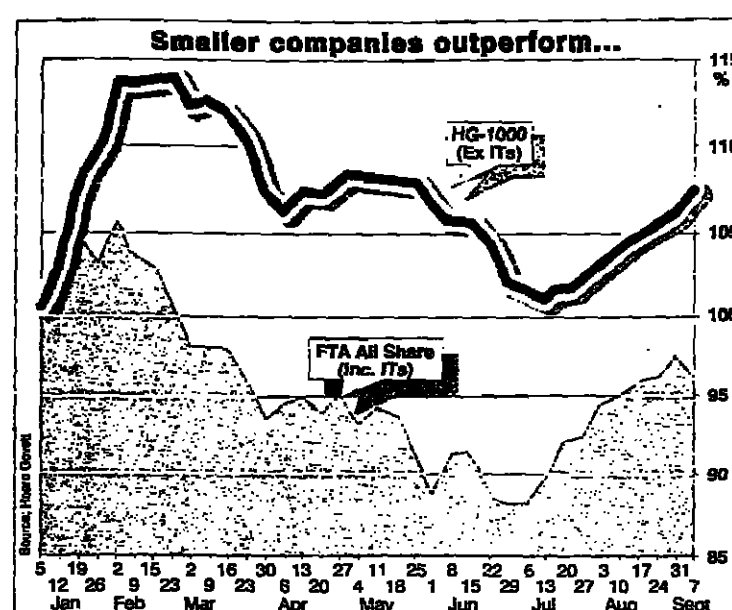
er companies is vital to the future growth of the British economy. The CBI welcomes the London Stock Exchange's initiative to help smaller companies to raise equity finance."

John Jenkins, the chairman of JP Jenkins, an important market maker in securities traded under Rule 4.2, said an increasing number of investors were interested in companies not quoted on the Official List or the USM. "The proposed Alternative Investment Market should provide a sensible and cost-effective platform

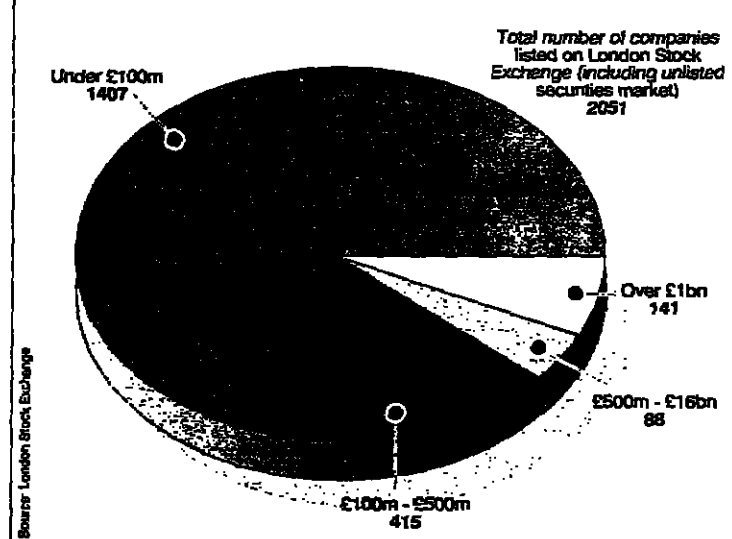
Many argue that a new secondary market should not restrict investors' freedom to take a calculated risk

for such companies to raise equity finance from a larger pool of investors."

There are well-run, smaller companies which need access to equity if they are to grow. Often, they are not yet big enough to generate the interest needed for a liquid market in their shares after flotation, nor might they be able to cope with the costs of being a public company. Development capital is an alternative but is relatively expensive, and still re-



...and dominate the stock market



quires an exit at some stage. There must be a case for a secondary market for such companies, open to sophisticated investors who understand the risks of investing in these companies but are able to assess possible rewards.

The plans for the new market distinguish between entry requirements, removing some hurdles, and minimising listing costs and regulation of trading. Many argue that a secondary market should not restrict investors' freedom to take a calculated risk.

Neil Austin, head of new issues at KPMG Peat Marwick, gave an initial welcome to the plans. "It's good and refreshing to have a different approach, going for less regulation and minimising the costs," he said.

The new market will attract a range of companies. These include those simply looking for a trading facility, which could make for an attractive market and improve liquidity, and those that want only to raise a small amount of money and may already have an idea of their potential investors. That could be good for local and regional investment.

The new market will also attract companies aiming to raise money to expand, such as some high-tech businesses. These are the type of companies that will need more guidance to help them to tap into the various sources of finance available, including institutional investors.

Clearly, in the latter case, there will be practical obligations that will increase the costs. All this comes at a

time when smaller companies are outperforming the market as a whole and the new issues market has been rejuvenated.

Hoare Govett's HG1,000 index, which tracks the performance of the smallest 1,000 quoted companies, is showing a capital gain of 8.4 per cent, excluding investment trusts, this year and has substantially outperformed the FTSE All-share index, which is down 4.5 per cent (including investment trusts).

More than 130 companies joined the Official List in the first half of the year and several more are understood to be waiting in the wings. The total could swell to more than 200 by the end of the year, as a nervous equity market attempts to recover and institutions have funds to invest in the right opportunities, despite several well-publicised flotation postponements.

Most companies participating in the new market will be perfectly sound but there will always be sharks. The exchange will not pre-empt prospectuses, or be responsible for the accuracy of documents. If someone wanted to take advantage, an OTC-type company could raise money and disappear quickly, though directors have to disclose their backgrounds and are responsible for documents, which will require professional advice. There are also onerous legal penalties.

Remember that the Alternative Investment Market is meant for the more sophisticated investor. Buyer, beware.

## Weighing up options for British Gas

When Sid was enticed eight years ago to buy British Gas from the Government, some were suggested the theme of the advertising campaign should have been: "Tell Sid he already owns it."

A fairer admission would have been: "Tell Sid not to rely too much on the prospectus, because they'll be changing the rules eventually anyway."

Since then, the political and regulatory tide has been running away from fully vertically integrated monopolies such as British Gas. The 1980s answer was to have a regulator cracking the whip on the monopoly and setting up a series of hoops, in the form of increasingly harsh price controls, to require it to perform. But the trend towards the end of the 1980s was towards privatised monopolies that operated in a mixed environment of competition in the markets they served and a non-integrated industry structure that meant they did not control the entire process from source to customer.

After privatisation, Sir Denis Rooke, then chairman of British Gas, was bailed in his desire to own the North Sea fields from which his raw materials come. But Gas still controlled the means of distribution for the material it bought from the North Sea suppliers, which should have effectively shut out any independent that wanted to compete on the customers' doorstep.

In 1992, British Gas requested a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry that eventually called for Gas's transportation and storage side to be hived off into a separate company, renamed TransCo and operating as a stand-alone business.

The price that TransCo can charge British Gas and the independent suppliers that have come in since the end of 1990 to take 48 per cent of the competitive market to supply big industrial users is subject to tough controls. The inroads made by the independents have not been difficult to achieve, given that Gas is required to publish its tariffs. Ofgas last

month confirmed a price cap of inflation minus 5 per cent. The independents protested that it was too lax and would put prices up to the consumer and British Gas said that it would threaten investment, jobs and future dividends.

The new controls came in next month, but the competition applies only to the industrial market, or customers who take more than 35,000 therms. Of rather more pressing concern to Gas is the future of the domestic market, and whether the independents will be allowed to sell to all householders by 1998. Whether this is to go into the forthcoming Queen's Speech will be considered the week after next by a Cabinet sub-committee. After his decision yesterday to hold the dividend, Richard Giordano, the chairman, can be accused of crying wolf in the summer, when the company gave warning of a possible cut. Even before yesterday's price rise, analysts were convinced the balance sheet could support a maintained payment, and any cut would have been a political gesture that could have rebounded on British Gas on the stock market.

Yesterday, the company was giving little away on its future approach to dividends, or to the regulator. Analysts believe British Gas has three options. It has hinted at a flotation of the supply business, keeping the transport side as its core business, although this would require the Government's blessing. It has non-regulated assets to grow, mainly the exploration and production business that owns the Morecambe Bay gas field, bits of the North Sea and assets in, for example, Tunisia, Thailand and Argentina.

While these last have their attractions, the company's experience in Canada, a market it has entered and departed with little to show for its efforts, must count against it. A float of the supply side, effectively a trading operation that buys in product and then sells on water-thin margins, would be difficult, given that British Gas has never indicated its level of profitability.

Paul Spedding, gas watcher at Kleinwort Benson, said: "I'm not convinced the business is floatable. If you wanted to sell it in the City, you are asking them to buy something where you don't know what the rules are going to be by 1998."

The third option seems the most attractive, namely that of driving down costs at its core transportation business faster than the regulator can turn the ratchet. Yesterday's figures, showing a loss of almost 3,000 jobs from the UK gas business in the first half, indicate that Gas has that task under way.



Giordano: crying wolf

MARTIN WALLER

## THE TIMES CITY DIARY

### The singing executive

YOU have heard of The Singing Detective, now comes the singing headhunter, Chris Cartwright, the 49-year-old vocalist, rhythm guitar player, and well-respected City broker (a former Wood Mackenzie partner, a former head of equities at Paribas Capital Markets and lately of Credit Lyonnais Laing) has turned from chasing equities to chasing executive heads. Cartwright has set up his own headhunting company and, with tradition in mind, has elected a corporate name that mirrors his initials. City Executive Consultants. The focus will be on financial services appointments embracing fund management, investment banking and securities positions, for which posts salaries of between £80,000 and £200,000 — and more — are invariably commanded. For the record, Cartwright reveals for the first time that his middle name is Egerton. Whether Cartwright forms or joins a new City band — his own Way Back When performs regularly, and he once performed a few Christmas numbers for the in-house Tired and Emotional group at Paribas — remains to be seen. But if the City suddenly brightens up with warbling executives, you will know who found them.

NOTICE on a desk at an insurance firm in Bristol: "Blessed are the brief, for they shall have small telephone bills."

### Ship ahoy!

LOOKING for a slightly used luxury motor cruiser from a sea-loving Swede? Bo Göranson, chairman of Intrum Justitia, the London-listed debt collector, told me over a pooped lunch in St Katharine Dock that his personally owned, MV Lady Justitia, which was used as a hospital-ity mess during this year's Whitbread Round the World Race, is up for sale. The company yacht, named Intrum Justitia, of course, which took second place in the race and cost £12 million.



Göranson: Swiss trip

will also eventually be sold. Meanwhile, the yacht is being freighted to Switzerland's land-locked Lake Constance to fly the company's slogan "Fair Pay" flag. Could Göranson be fishing for an Swiss admirality?

### There's gratitude

THE trouble with being generous is that it costs. BTR and Cookson staged separate analysts' meetings yesterday for their respective interim reports — BTR summoned the great and the good to Vincent Square for £am. Cookson requested a 10.45am appearance in London Wall. Cookson, concerned and anxious that the analysts should arrive in comfort, ordered eight black cabs to ferry them the mere couple of miles across the City. Jumping into the first of the fleet en route to Cookson, one ever-alert analyst asked the driver "Why is £2 already on the clock?" — and was told "Because, mate, we've been here since 8am". Analysts, ever grateful, have since knocked £500 of their forecasts of Cookson's year-end profits.

### Goble grape

COULD this be the ultimate booze-up? Jonathan Goble, BZW's Excel-rated drinks analyst, finally tied the knot last weekend at the mature and well-rounded age of 34. A



rural English wedding? Not a chance. Goble married Hélène des Garets in the rural parish of Absac, a few miles north of Bordeaux's best known claret town, St Emilion, and a stone's throw from Beaulieu, the family chateau. A sober affair? Hardly. The des Garets produce 80,000 litres of award-winning claret a year, so you can draw your own conclusions. Goble, of course, will claim it was all in the interests of research.

### Fun seeker

SO ANALYSTS do move corporate houses for corporate love and not for money after all! Mike Crawshaw, head of European research at Credit Lyonnais Laing, is cock-a-hoop that Dominic Pearce, whose speciality is Spain, and who leapt from 11th place in

the 1992 Extel ratings to third last year, and again moved up to number two place in this year's Extel survey, is joining Credit Lyonnais from Warburtons. "It was not a question of paying him [more] money. Dominic is energetic. I told him how the firm was expanding, and he clicks in with our ambitions," Crawshaw said — in English.

### Bon mots

NAMES have been omitted to protect the guilty, but spotted on a conference room wall in South Africa, and faithfully recorded from otherwise serious executive meetings, come the following serious observations by grown men: "Apart from the fact that we don't have any money, are there any problems with our cash flow?"

"He will jump out of his grave to argue the cost of a funeral."

"You can take honesty too far."

"I only get indigestion when I eat humble pie."

"The truth can be said in many different ways."

"I hate the Poms. I left England twice."

"I will speak slowly. No, please just say less."

"I gave a verbal instruction and I have signed it."

"You can either have an air conditioner or an office. You can't have both."

COLIN CAMPBELL

## BUSINESS LETTERS

### C&G should offer consolation prize

From Lord Monson  
Sir, The letter from Mr Andrew Longhurst, chief executive of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, (August 23) raises more questions than it answers.

The 1986 Building Societies Act, with its 126 sections and 21 schedules, is undoubtedly heavy going and often obscure. But the relevant section 100(9) is quite clear and unambiguous in outlawing any scheme of the type originally proposed by C&G. Why, then, were the hopes of the borrowers and a good proportion of the savers raised so high by the society earlier this year, in the certain knowledge that they were to be cruelly dashed?

Moreover, the fact that there was never any realistic prospect of the Lloyds monies reaching these many tens of thousands of individuals does not absolve C&G from its moral obligation to devise some consolation prize, however small, for all those so iniquitously disqualified by the flawed 1986 Act from

benefiting from the Lloyds offer.

True, not one penny of the funds to be introduced by Lloyds next year could be used for this purpose. But provided the C&G's existing reserves are not imprudently depleted, what is there to stop the society, in the ordinary course of its business, from modestly improving terms on a temporary basis for existing borrowers and for all those who opened or switched share accounts between the January 1, 1993, and the date of the initial offer?

The C&G's latest slogan, "We're run to make you richer", adds insult to injury for the losers. Nobody can seriously argue that the revised scheme has any basis in equity, and the very large number of people who stand to gain nothing from it should resolve to vote "No" — unless somebody, somewhere, makes it worth their while to change their minds.

Yours faithfully,  
LORD MONSON,  
House of Lords, SW1.

### Value subtracted

From Mr Michael G. Sutton  
Sir, Further to the letter from Mr John Dege (September 6), I originally purchased 1,000 shares in Concord Energy at a cost of approximately £900. I was extremely gratified recently to discover that, following a "financial restructuring", I now own 20 shares in Kelt Energy worth a staggering £9.75.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL G. SUTTON,  
3 Sutton Mews,  
Mariners Court,  
Sutton Harbour,  
Plymouth.

### Hope dashed

From Mr Rod Williams  
Sir, I approached Melvyn Markus's article today (Heseltine rules out Archer publication, September 7) with some elation. Alas, the reference was only to the report on the noble Lord's share dealing, not his books!

Yours faithfully,  
ROD WILLIAMS,  
7 Pigeon's Close, Thripton,  
Royston, Hertfordshire.

### Tax and start-ups

From Mr Andrew McIntyre  
Sir, Michelle Milsom believes that the taxpayer is effectively subsidising businesses that go bust owing hefty amounts of tax/NIC (Business Letters, September 6). This may well be true, but there is another side to the story.

Four years ago, I remortgaged my family home to raise £10,000 for a start-up manufacturing/export busi-

ness. Within two years, I had handed over all that money in taxes (rates & Employers' NIC), at a time when I was still embroiled in heavy start-up losses. In addition, I had to bear all the usual costs involved in administering VAT and payroll taxes.

Why should proprietors engaged in job creation activities be burdened with punitive levels of taxation during periods of negative income — whereas their counterparts in

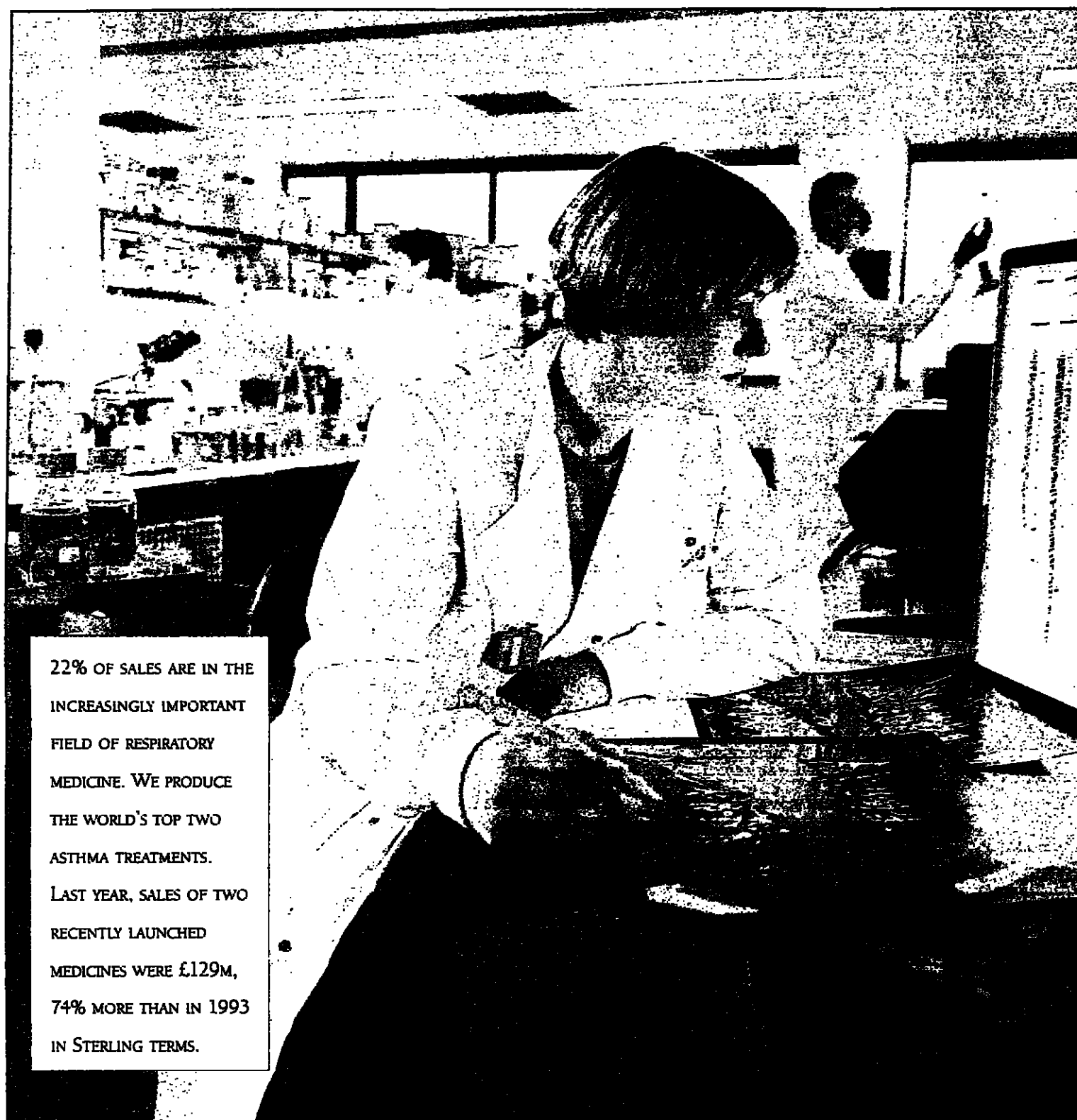
salaried posts are taxed only on the surpluses they earn?

Who is subsidising who? And who gains, from a flawed policy that has put thousands out of work — and increased the burden on all remaining tax-payers?

Yours faithfully,  
ANDREW MCINTYRE,  
Backwoodsmen,  
Barcadine,  
Oban,  
Argyle.

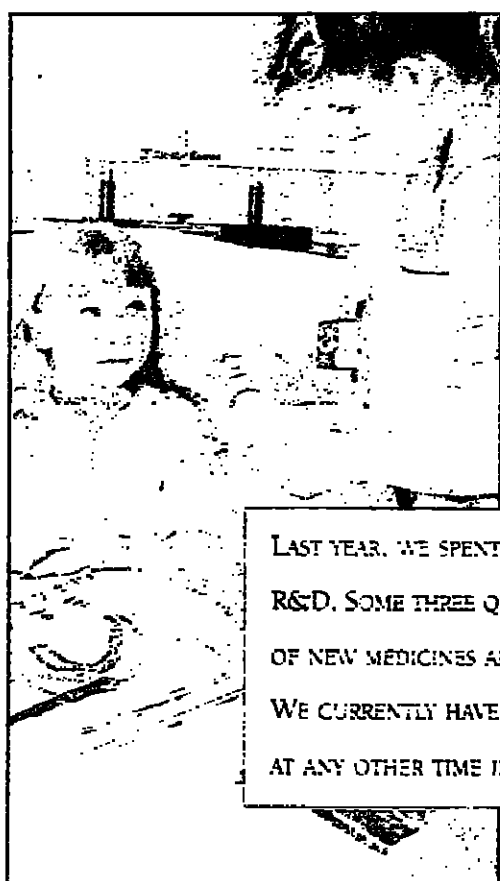


# How we did last year. And what we're doing to ensure Glaxo's long-term health.



22% OF SALES ARE IN THE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FIELD OF RESPIRATORY MEDICINE. WE PRODUCE THE WORLD'S TOP TWO ASTHMA TREATMENTS. LAST YEAR, SALES OF TWO RECENTLY LAUNCHED MEDICINES WERE £129M, 74% MORE THAN IN 1993 IN STERLING TERMS.

GLAXO has had another year of strong growth. Over the past 20 years we have achieved compound annual growth in sales of 16.4% and in earnings per share of 23.3%. BUT in a changing environment for the pharmaceutical industry, how does Glaxo plan to stay ahead? We remain committed to our mission – to bring to the market innovative medicines which offer real economic value to governments and healthcare providers, and therapeutic benefits to patients.



LAST YEAR, WE SPENT OVER £850 MILLION ON PHARMACEUTICAL R&D. SOME THREE QUARTERS WAS DEVOTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MEDICINES AND NEW PRESENTATIONS OF EXISTING ONES. WE CURRENTLY HAVE MORE COMPOUNDS IN DEVELOPMENT THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE COMPANY.

We will continue to maximise the contribution from our strong portfolio of products and introduce new products into global markets.

We are pursuing growth in new and emerging markets, where great potential exists, and we are striving for effective cost management and efficiency throughout our worldwide organisation. We look to the future, alert to



AS POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL BARRIERS CRUMBLE, PENT-UP DEMAND FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE OFFERS NEW AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY. GLAXO IS RAPIDLY ESTABLISHING A SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE IN MARKETS SUCH AS EASTERN EUROPE AND CHINA.

the challenges and opportunities of change, from a position of financial strength, world class R&D capability and a full pipeline of products under development.

WHAT better prescription for long-term health?

ADVANCES IN GENETICS AND INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF THE CAUSES OF DISEASE OFFER THE PROSPECT OF REVOLUTIONARY BREAKTHROUGHS IN MEDICINE. GLAXO'S SCIENTISTS ARE WORKING BOTH IN-HOUSE AND WITH SPECIALIST BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANIES AND ACADEMIC GROUPS TO HARNESS THIS NEW SCIENCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF PATIENTS.

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 1994

	1994 (Unaudited)	1993	% Change
Turnover	£5,656m	£4,930m	15
Trading Profit	£1,819m	£1,525m	19
Profit Before Tax	£1,840m	£1,675m	10
Earnings Per Share	42.9p	39.9p	8
Dividends Per Share	27.0p	22.0p	23
Research and Development	£858m	£739m	16
Capital Expenditure	£543m	£650m	(16)
Net Liquid Funds	£2,224m	£1,815m	23

# Glaxo

WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD

FOR A COPY OF THE ANNUAL REPORT, WRITE TO THE SECRETARY (AR), GLAXO HOLDINGS p.l.c., LANSDOWNE HOUSE, BERKELEY SQUARE, LONDON W1X 6BQ.

The figures for the year ended 30th June 1993 are an abridged statement of the full Group accounts for that year which have been delivered to the Registrar of Companies and on which the auditors made an unqualified report.



## Emap calls for £77m to fund takeovers

By RODNEY HOBSON

A BOUT of acquisitions and the promise of more to come has prompted Emap, the media group, to ask its shareholders to stump up £77.2 million in a one-for-eight rights issue.

The new shares are priced at 360p, compared with a market price of 416p, down 2p yesterday. The issue is underwritten by Schroders. Since

Emap's last cash call, in June 1992, when £78 million was raised, the company has spent £74 million on a string of newspapers and magazines, including £27.8 million for Thomson business magazines. It has launched 22 new magazines and newspapers at a cost of £13.2 million.

In addition, it has just paid £105 million for 38 French magazines, £11.2 million for three UK golf magazines and

will have to find up to £50 million to pay for shares in Trans World Communications, the local radio broadcaster based in the North West. Emap now speaks for more than 90 per cent of Trans World's shares and the takeover offer remains open for further acceptances.

Emap's net debt has reached £124 million and would grow to £174 million without the rights issue. Sir

John Hoskyns, the chairman, said: "We continue to see opportunities to make small and medium-sized acquisitions that complement our core businesses."

He said that advertising, which accounts for half the group's revenue, was continuing to increase.

### COMPANY NEWS IN BRIEF

**BELLWINCH (Fin)**  
Pre-tax: £544,000  
EPS: 1.1p (0.9p)  
Div: Nil (nil)

Profit in previous year was £161,000. Net asset value rose to 25.1p a share from 23.9p. Turnover was £17.47 million.

**HALL ENGINEERING (Int)**  
Pre-tax: £2m (£3.7m)  
EPS: 3.78p (8.2p)  
Div: 5p (5.48p)

Operating profits fell to £493,000 from £1.54 million despite rise in turnover to £72 million from £65 million.

**BOSTROM (Int)**  
Pre-tax: £2.25m (£1m)  
EPS: 10.1p (5.1p)  
Div: 2.5p (2.5p)

Turnover rose to £32.4 million from £24.2 million. Increased order intake lifted seating division. Good prospects for growth.

**LITHO SUPPLIES (Int)**  
Pre-tax: £2.46m (£2.23m)  
EPS: 8.1p (6.3p)  
Div: 2.73p (nil)

Turnover rose to £30.2 million from £29.7 million. Board expects a marginal increase in earnings for the full year.

**GOWRIES (Int)**  
Pre-tax: £179,000  
EPS: 1.65p (1.84p loss)  
Div: 1p (1p)

Previous interim loss was £137,000. Turnover rose to £28.4 million from £25.7 million. The motor division returned to profit.

**PORVIAIR (Int)**  
Pre-tax: £354,000  
EPS: 4.5p (4.5p)  
Div: 1.6p (1.4p)

Previous interim profit was £349,000. Turnover stable at £10.2 million, against £10.3 million previously.

### Sale lifts profits at Laing

A £9.9 million profit on the sale of the Castlecourt retail scheme in Belfast rescued profits at Laing, the construction and housing group. Pre-tax profits more than doubled to £11.9 million from £5.1 million in the six months to June 30, although operating profits fell to £5.9 million from £6.1 million. Housing, which lost money in the first half of 1993, bounced back to a £2.1 million profit. Earnings per share rose from 4.1p to 9.4p but the dividend is held at 3p. The shares tumbled 21p to 269p.

### Sema slides

Sema, the information technology group, said profits from continuing operations rose to £15 million in the half-year to June 30, against £9.7 million, while net cash rose to £23.5 million from £18.2 million at the year-end. But pre-tax profits fell to £12.6 million from £15.2 million. Earnings fell to 9.13p a share (10.46p). The interim dividend is lifted to 1.6p (1.2p).

### Yorkshire loss

Yorkshire Food Group has raised the interim dividend to 0.8p a share (0.72p) despite a rise in pre-tax losses to £780,000 from £376,000 in the six months to June 24. Losses per share were 2.06p (2.19p). Turnover rose to £50.6 million (£29.5 million) but higher costs left an operating loss of £73,000 (£86,000 profit).

### Manders ahead

Underlying profits at Manders, the coatings and printing inks company, rose slightly to £5.06 million in the six months to June 30 and adjusted earnings were unchanged at 9.12p a share. The interim dividend is held at 2.9p. Pre-tax profit was £18.3 million (£4.9 million), including £13.2 million profit on discontinued arm disposals and a £2.67 million property surplus.

## Sun Alliance to close 60 Swinton branches

By SARAH BAGNALL, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

SUN Alliance, one of the UK's largest composite insurers, is axing 200 jobs and closing 60 Swinton broking offices. The group also plans an aggressive drive to become a key player in the direct writing market, in which it sells insurance direct to customers over the telephone.

The insurer, under the chairmanship of Sir Christopher Benson, already has a presence in the UK direct writing market, with 1.25 million customers. It intends to set up further operations in Germany, Spain and Italy.

Roger Taylor, chief executive, said: "I would like the first of our continental European ventures to be opened in early 1996. But these will be far broader than just providing motor and household insurance."

The closure of the Swinton branches will cost £8 million and reduce the number to 630. Sun Alliance is setting up a central telemarketing office for Swinton, which will deal direct with the customer, passing them on to the relevant branch when necessary. Sun has decided that its switch to telemarketing means it needs fewer branches of Swinton in the high street.

Mr Taylor's remarks came as the unveiled a sharp in-

crease in pre-tax profits from £61.7 million to £180.2 million in the six months to June 30. The dividend was lifted from 5.25p to 5.5p, paid out of earnings of 18.2p a share, up from 5.2p last time. The results were broadly in line with market expectations.

The general insurance operations made an underwriting loss of £36.8 million, down from £152.1 million last time, while investment income rose £8.8 million to £186.1 million. Life profits rose £6 million to £44.3 million.

The improvement in the general insurance result was driven by a sharp turnaround in Britain. The British operation made an underwriting profit of £33 million, its first for five years, compared with a loss of £100.6 million last time. The result benefited from a reduction in mortgage indemnity and weather losses.

Last year's loss also suffered from costs of terrorist attacks in the City of London. Denmark, which accounts for about half the insurer's European business, saw underwriting losses rise from £14 million to £24 million. Mr Taylor said this was a disappointing result and reflected a poor rating environment and reserve strengthening. However, rate increases are now being achieved and the result is expected to improve.



Switch to telemarketing: Sir Christopher Benson

## GLOBAL EXPANSION IN BEVERAGES AND CONFECTIONERY

### 1994 HALF YEAR RESULTS

(Unaudited)

"I am pleased to report excellent progress in the first half of 1994 with pre-tax profit up 23.2% to £204.8m. An indication of the strength of the Group is the pleasing increase in trading margin from 10.0% to 12.1%."

Sales	£1,768.1m	+ 3.5%
Trading Profit	£213.9m	+ 25.0%
Pre-Tax Profit	£204.8m	+ 23.2%
Earnings per Share	13.42p	+ 9.9%
Dividend per Share	4.60p	+ 27.8%

Earnings per share increased 9.9% and businesses acquired in 1993 were positive to earnings. Headline earnings per share rose 18.7%.

An interim dividend of 4.60 pence has been declared, giving an increase of 27.8%, reflecting both the growth in earnings and a rebalancing of the interim and final dividends referred to at the AGM in May.

We have continued to develop the Group in the first half with acquisitions of confectionery businesses in Continental Europe. The A&W Brands acquisition has been successfully and quickly integrated into our US beverages business.

The excellent summer weather in the UK and across the whole of Europe has added further stimulus to soft drinks sales in the region at the start of the second half and the Board has every confidence we will achieve good results for the year as a whole."

*Dominic Cadbury*

Dominic Cadbury, Chairman

# Cadbury Schweppes

MANAGEMENT PROVEN IN THE MARKET PLACE

Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia S	2.22	Bank	2.22
Austria Sch	17.83	Bank	17.83
Belgium Fr	25.49	Bank	25.49
Canada S	2.22	Bank	2.22
Cyprus Cyp	0.765	Bank	0.715
Denmark Kr	10.26	Bank	9.26
Finland Mk	8.37	Bank	7.67
France Fr	8.65	Bank	7.86
Germany Dm	2.25	Bank	2.24
Greece Dr	380.00	Bank	365.00
Hong Kong S	12.65	Bank	11.86
Ireland P	1.08	Bank	1.08
Italy Lit	2525.00	Bank	2570.00
Japan Yen	168.50	Bank	161.50
Malta	0.606	Bank	0.594
Netherlands Gld	2.234	Bank	2.004
Norway Kr	11.11	Bank	10.51
Portugal Esc	200.50	Bank	200.00
S Africa Rd	REF	Bank	5.45
Spain Pes	200.50	Bank	192.50
Sweden Kr	12.33	Bank	11.33
Switzerland Fr	2.15	Bank	1.97
Turkey Lira	REF	Bank	5067.12
USA S	1.642	Bank	1.512

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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☐ Leisure ☐ Telecom / media ☐ FMCG  
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☐ Oil / Gas / Chemical ☐ Professional ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

No. of staff involved in customer relations  
☐ 5-20 ☐ 20-50 ☐ 50-100 ☐ 100 or more

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The Only way to Professionally Track and Close Business



THE TIMES FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9 1994



**TRADING PERIOD:** Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1994	Low Company	Price	%	Yld	P/E
1993					
109	171 Perma	89	+	1	
110	171 Perma	89	+	1	
111	161 Phenomenal	101	+	2	15
112	161 Phenomenal	101	+	2	15
113	161 Phenomenal	101	+	2	15
114	161 Peridito	108		8.2	
115	161 Peridito	108		8.2	
116	161 Peridito	108		8.2	
117	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
118	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
119	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
120	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
121	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
122	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
123	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
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188	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
189	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9
190	661 Best Tech	725	+	4	9

PAPER, PRINT, ADVTG					
1994	Low Company	Price	%	Yld	P/E
1993					
161	406 Holdings	147		4.5	13.2
162	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
163	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
164	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
165	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
166	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
167	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
168	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
169	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
170	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
171	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
172	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
173	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
174	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
175	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
176	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
177	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
178	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
179	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
180	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
181	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
182	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
183	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
184	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
185	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
186	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
187	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
188	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
189	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1
190	372 ADP	161		2.6	23.1

[illegible]

107	35	Jason Hedges	35		
44	109	Asa	119	1	2.3 21.1
113	113	Shane Carr	113		49 16.9
75	209E	KEE	225H		
238	238	Barton	240		4.3 20.4
08	72	Bourne End	92		1.4
10	210	Bourne End	213		18 15.0
240	37	By Land	367	-2	2.4 24.4
37	121	Burgessheie	121		3.0 32.0
76	176	Burgessheie	176		2.7 16.8
18	90	Burford	100	-5	2.2 22.2
129	34	Ca. Regenia	157		1.2 16.1
105	230	Capitoli	230		1.4 50.0
230	230	Capitoli	236	-10	1.7 55.5
85	152	Cheshelton	167		1.8 41.2
78	535	Cheshelton	535		2.8 24.0
36	36	Ches. S&L Sta.	64		
12	7	Charles Nickolls	8		16.7
100	285	Clinton	310		5.5 5
30	32	Colman Ridley	40		
35	1458	Darwin	1495	-5	2.4 17.4
259	10	Darwin	11		
259	10	Darwin	11		
259	10	Darwin	11		

17	De Morgan	170		
20	Dewhurst James	170		24 677
23	Dewhurst James	170		21 238
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179	St. Francis Xavier	100	...	8.6	26.8
180	St. Ignace	100	...	3.2	16.8
181	St. Claremont	349	...	3.2	16.8
182	St. Joseph	100	...	14	20.5
183	St. Anthony	141	...	2.7	12.7
184	St. Francis	141	...	2.7	12.7
185	St. Ignace	141	...	8.2	12.7
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Source: Finisar  
USM: \* Price at suspension; † Ex dividend; ‡ Ex  
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distribution; \*\* Figures or report awaited. . No  
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**Vyla Lejeune Rollins, a psychologist, offers advice on restructuring**

"When you take an organisation through change you have to raise the tolerance threshold of individuals. If people are asked to

Ms Rollins advocates a collaborative approach which involves workshop sessions and exercises for groups and individuals. She acknowledges that some people might find the "soul-searching" exercises difficult. Inevitably, because psychology is involved,

Hoskyns is a service supplier and its staff used to be organised in divisions determined by the type of

The skill centres include a series of "practices", reflecting the core competency of individuals. Each practice has a leader, a sort of

Ms Rollins wonders whether that kind of provision is enough, but she concludes: "I am encouraged by organisations' readiness to look at psychology. It is the glue that keeps them functioning."

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# HAMILTON

## هكذا من الأصل



## INFOTECH

## Doing everything, virtually

The real Mick Hurrell looks at British experiments to create a virtual world of a virtual office, complete with virtual meetings

Would you be able to resist the temptation of indulging in a little virtual body building? Could you recognise a virtual corpse? And, getting really personal, would you feel comfortable if your virtual self was simply a block with eyes?

These are the kind of questions that a group of British workers will soon be helping to answer. They are taking part in a new research project in which virtual reality (VR) technology will take an important step out of the confines of laboratories and high-tech amusement arcades and into our everyday lives.

As part of the £3 million Virtuosi project, funded by the Department of Trade and Industry, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and industry, two pilot schemes starting this autumn will provide full-scale testing grounds for prototypes of the virtual workplace.

For example, BICC, the international cable manufacturing company, will host a "virtual factory" which will link several locations across the world into the same VR world. This will allow technical and manufacturing staff to trade expertise, information

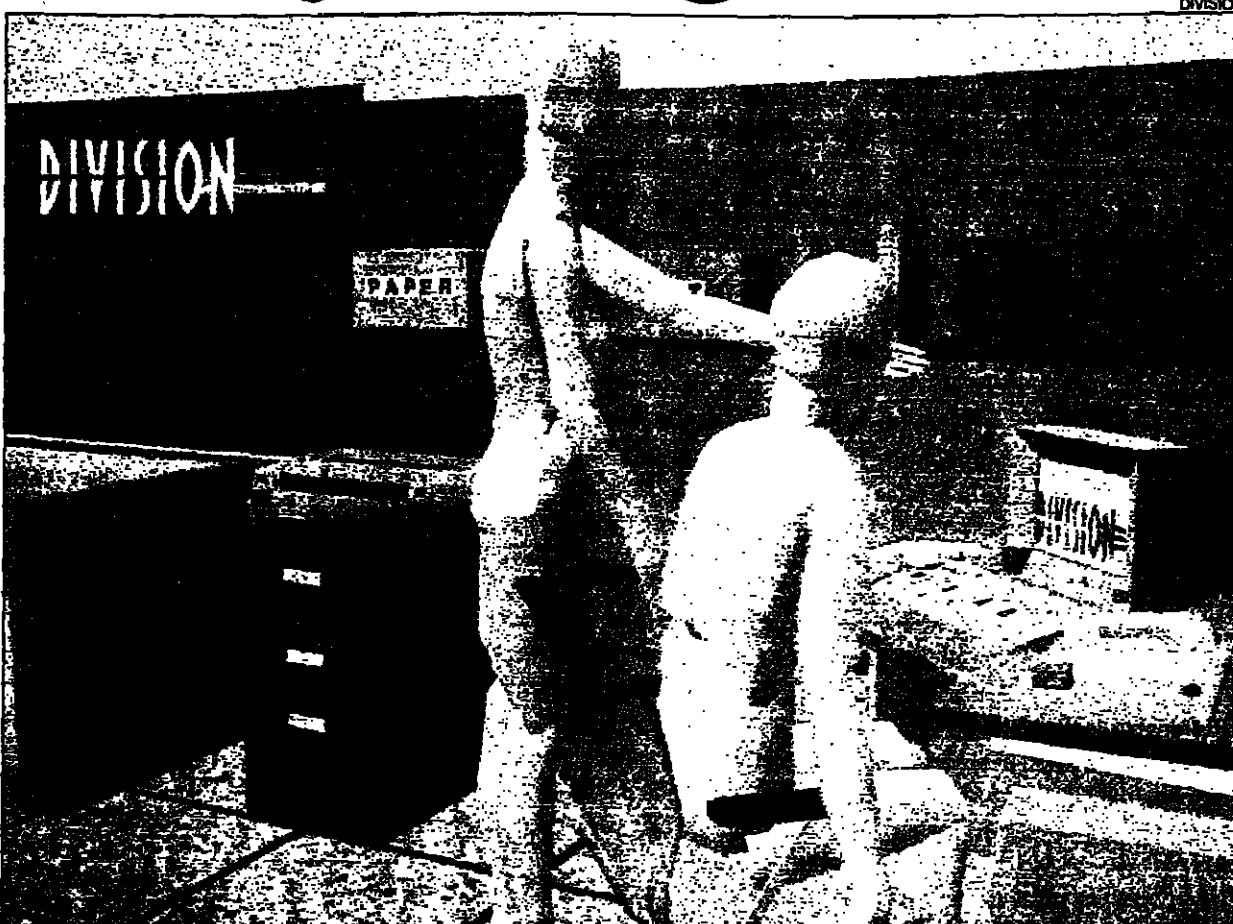
on technology and training and to hold meetings without expensive and time-consuming travel.

The "virtual catwalk" will link fashion designers in Nottingham, for example, with buyers in London. VR designs will be animated on moving mannequins, and designers will be able to move around them, discussing and changing them while negotiating with a potential client.

Virtuosi aims to test whether a VR work environment — with both true-to-life and abstract representations — can be a productive place for interactive, collaborative work. After all, it may be able to provide users with all the advantages of the office and shared workplace, without distractions or interruptions.

The principle of multiple-user VR allows any number of people to be present in the same computer-generated world — even though they might be in different buildings, cities or countries. Sitting at two-dimensional computer screens, or wearing 3-D VR headsets, users navigate their virtual bodies through the shared, audio-visual virtual world.

It is an exciting prospect, but producing multi-user VR sys-



These mannequins allow their "users" to be in two places at once, thanks to the creation of a virtual workplace

tems that encourage effective group working is not simply an issue of multimedia communications and computer networks. For the virtual workplace to make a significant impact on our lives, it will have to take account of the

real-life dynamics of how people behave and interact when working together. And that, as researchers looking to incorporate these principles into VR have found, is not straightforward. For example, how often does

a supportive word whispered in the ear, a quiet chat in the corner, or a knowing glance across a crowded table help to smooth the progress of any working day? Multi-user VR will need to model that complex set of skills.

Another issue is truthfulness. As we know from blockbuster films and computer games, VR worlds are fantasy worlds, and anything is possible. So, be honest: wouldn't it be tempting to create a leaner and meaner virtual version of yourself so that you could make more of a dynamic impression at important virtual meetings? But is such virtual body-building ethical? How truthful does VR embodiment have to be?

So the models for mirroring human interaction in VR, developed by Dr Steve Bedford, a senior lecturer in Computer Science at Nottingham University, a team from Nottingham and Manchester univers-

ities and the Swedish Institute of Computer Science, have been brought to life in the form of "blockies". The blockies are simple embodiments of VR users, who reside and move around in 3-D space. They are T-shaped blocks — a shape which, although simple, can show body orientation. They can also be annotated to show what visualisation hardware each user has access to: an audio-only user has ears, a screen-based user has one eye, a VR helmet wearer has two eyes while a text-only user has a "T" on their head.

Blockies, when hidden from view, have a set of clever mechanisms for choosing only the conversations or exchange they want from the many that may be on offer in a VR group. While taking part in the meeting, they can perform the equivalent of whispering into

someone's ear or peeling off into a corner for a quiet group chat away from the main action.

Each blockie has a controllable invisible "aura" around it. Only when their auras collide are channels opened which allow interaction between them, initially by sharing name and address information — the equivalent of exchanging business cards.

The degree of progress then depends on the "awareness" each user has of the other. Awareness has two components: "focus" and "nimbus". It allows users to decide how interested they should be in each other.

The notion of spatial focus as a way of directing our attention, and hence filtering information, is an everyday experience. Nimbus, on the other hand, allows one user to try to influence another — the equivalent of trying to make yourself seen or heard, for example, by hovering next to a group trying to get a word in edgewise.

But though embodying users in the form of blockies might be adequate for some applications, it may be limiting in others. The question of embodiment — how users need to appear to each other to allow a particular shared task to be performed — is one of the key questions Virtuosi hopes to answer.

Users of the Virtual Factory and Virtual Catwalk systems will put a variety of embodiments through their paces. As well as blockies, there will be more lifelike representations, including 2-D and 3-D figures with textured photographs of the user's face on them. Humanoid mannequin shapes will also be tested. Virtual limbs will be incorporated to enhance communication.

The Virtuosi project will last for three years and possibly blaze a trail for establishing VR systems in the workplace. Discovering a virtual corpse, by the way, is not the result of a virtual murder. It is a lifeless VR body whose "owner" has thoughtlessly left the terminal without logging off. So look out for the virtual body that either has its eyes closed, or is slumped over the virtual table.

## Live aid for lovers of hi-tech

A record 200,000 people are expected to visit Britain's biggest consumer electronics show, Live 94, at Earls Court, starting on September 20.

Launched at Olympia last year, Live attracted 141,000 visitors. This year's event is three times the size and moved to the new venue for extra space. The show, organised by News International, the publisher of The Times, and designed to be a showcase for consumer electronics products, will include many new products due to be introduced this autumn for Christmas.

Members of the public are encouraged to try the wide variety of goods on show and to talk to staff from the manufacturers without coming under any pressure to buy, although Comet will be operating a store at the show for those who want to take something home.

Personal computer companies with new products for the home market will be out in force including Apple's latest PC which can show live television pictures while you work. Microsoft and Compaq will also have stands and there will be exhibits from the fields of video, hi-fi, home automation, photography and TV, a daily programme of seminars and regular appearances by TV and sports stars.

Live 94 is on from Sept. 20 to Sept. 25, 9.30am-7.30pm (open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday), entrance £4 weekdays, £7 weekends (family ticket for two adults and up to three children £16). Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are available from London Underground stations and at the door on the day. Further information: 0691 500103 (9.30p a minute cheap rate, 49p a minute at all other times).

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

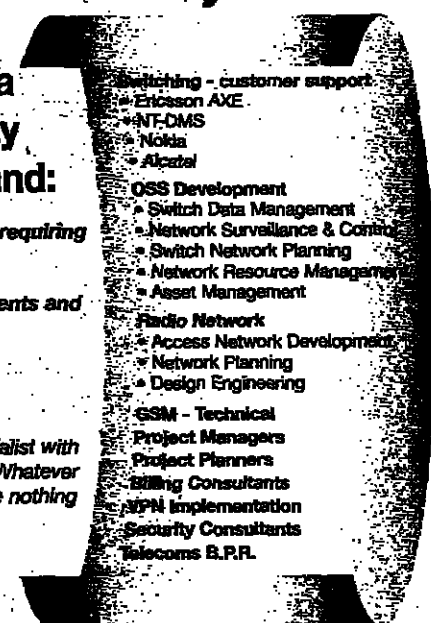
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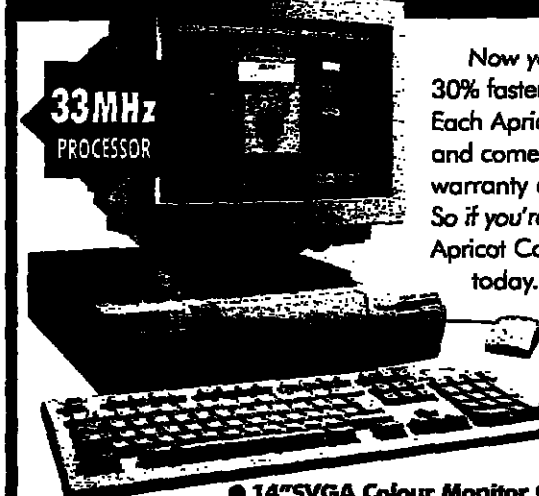
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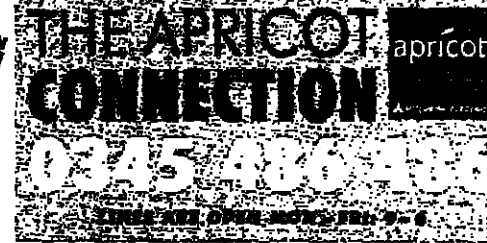
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**POP page 36**  
Poetry in moping: Caitlin Moran has tea with Mark Eitzel, the ultimate balding-man-with-guitar

# ARTS

**POP page 37**  
Last of the great romantics? A new slimline Luther Vandross talks to Alan Jackson



## Native wit reclaims the stage

After some years in the doldrums, British playwrights are set fair for a wave of London success. Matt Wolf catches the tide

London has been as theatrically productive as ever so far this year, but with one noticeable gap — the sorts of impressive new British plays that look set to go the distance. That may change this autumn, and 26-year-old Jonathan Harvey is a significant part of the reason why. Tonight sees the premiere of his most ambitious play to date, *Babies*, at a theatre, the Royal Court, whose commitment to new British writing marks a change from a series of recent high-profile American premieres (*Six Degrees of Separation*, *Oleanna*, *Fires in the Mirror*).

Later this month *Babies* is joined in the West End by the third London engagement of Harvey's buoyant *Beautiful Thing*, a simpler, sweeter play than its more emotionally variegated successor. And Harvey, happily, is not the only writing game in town. Also due shortly are new plays from Doug Lucie (*Gauchos*), a bristling talent whose output over the years has been rather less than early successes like *Hard Feelings* and *Progress* might have led one to believe, and Richard Cameron (*The Mortal Ash*), whose emergence as a Bush Theatre regular has constituted a quietly bracing event of its own. Add the arrival from Nottingham of Tim Firth's *Neville's Island* and the West End transfers of two other Royal Court hits — Kevin Elyot's *My Night with Reg* and Sue Townsend's *The Queen and I* — and it looks as if British writing stands at least some chance of holding its own against a continued American onslaught that includes the London premiere in November of Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women* and the transfer to the

Old Vic of Wendy Wasserstein's *The Sisters Rosenzweig*. In an ideal theatrical landscape, of course, this breadth of new writing — and let us not forget new plays on tap for the National and the Almeida from Christopher Hampton and Tom Stoppard — would be an ongoing fact of London theatrical life. But what's interesting is how irrelevant British premieres have often seemed of late. Having hosted an extraordinary run of new work that included *Arcadia* and *The Madness of George III*, the National has commanded attention this year with major reimaginings of Jean Cocteau's *Les Parents Terribles* and Tennessee Williams' *Sweet Bird of Youth*. In context it is not surprising that the National's most exciting "new" play at present is the imminent return of David Hare's four-

Is there in fact enough new writing to go around?

year-old *Racing Demon*, a true contemporary classic. The Royal Shakespeare Company's new writing policy, in the meantime, has offered up terrific new plays from Peter Whelan (*The Bright and Bold Design*, *The School of Night*) and virtually no one else — at least, that is, no one British, which may be why its major new play this autumn, *New England*, comes from the RSC's favourite American house dramatist, Richard Nelson. All of which prompts the question, is there enough new writing to go around? And when that writing is produced, are there sufficient audiences to support it, or is the venue better off mounting a directorial showcase reinvestigation of a classic? (The Almeida and the Donmar Warehouse are just two theatres



Jonathan Harvey, whose play *Babies* opens at the Royal Court tonight, is one of the new breed of British writers repelling the foreign invasion of the West End

that have tended to fare better, both critically and financially, when mounting Molière, Euripides, and Kander and Ebb, rather than premieres from Han Ong, Howard Barker or Michael Frayn.) Harvey acknowledges that among his generation "the theatre is not very sexy, not very exciting", which makes doubly intriguing his own attraction to it. "As a gay man, I probably quite liked it because it's quite camp. But I still meet people in the pub and say I work in an office, since it's quite embarrassing to say you're a playwright; you end up thinking you should be brainy and look like Bamber Gascoigne, when the thing is, I don't really know about theatre. I just know about my own stuff."

Alan Ayckbourn, who has done more than any living English dramatist to make an industry of playwrighting, argues that new work in this country lacks a double set of obstacles: one, he says, is the prevailing sense that American drama now best addresses modern issues. "These playwrights are pretty gutsy. You see a controversial play like [David Mamet's] *Oleanna*, and you feel when you come out that you've had an evening."

Ayckbourn also points to the rise of collaborative company work — the kind of Theatre de Complicite experience which is enormously cheering in and of itself, but tends not to do much to swell the book list at Samuel French. "These plays are great while they last," he says, "but they don't actually produce a script; they live and die with that company. In Scarborough what we're always trying to do is develop a good old-fashioned playwright who can be published and then be produced by 20 to 30 companies."

A less-publicised hurdle for new writing is its sometimes dubious appeal for directors, who are likely to be far more acclaimed for their work on revivals. Deborah Warner and Katie Mitchell, among others, have so far steered clear of new plays, and Steven Pimlott only got round to trying them, with varying degrees of success, earlier this year. And while the Royal Court's artistic director, Stephen Daldry, may champion the strength in numbers of new British plays, it is worth noting that his international reputation, not to mention his Tony and Olivier awards, has come from work in the classics. Dominic Dromgoole, artistic director at the Bush, says: "You never make your name in this country directing new plays; the best directors are those who do new work, and no one's ever heard of them. There's an over-strong critical culture that likes to see a classic and cross-reference massively." But with a new play, he goes on, "you're watching a raw piece of muck, and critics don't really know what the process is; they're just confused."

Still, any revival, by definition, was once a new play, and it is that fact which makes the current output of new plays particularly valuable. After all, what are directors interested in the canon to do in decades to come if that canon is not enlarged? In that sense, Harvey has the best of both worlds, with a premiere running alongside a revival that was itself premiered little more than a year ago. "I'm flavour of the month, but the theatre is very fickle; what I've got to say is probably quite hip at the moment," Harvey says, with typically droll self-awareness. "I don't know how many plays I've got inside me; I'd like to think I'm Alan Ayckbourn and will churn a new one out every six months, but I'm not sure I can. What I do know is I'm never going to have three plays on all at the same time."

● *Babies* opens at the Royal Court (071-730 1745) tonight; *Beautiful Thing* previews from Sept 20 at the Duke of York's (071-836 5122), opens on Sept 26

LONDON CONCERTS: Visiting ensembles bring Charpentier to the Wigmore Hall and Beethoven and Brahms to the Proms

## Stylish display of Baroque flourish

In the first week of its new season, the Wigmore Hall has already staged what might prove to be one of the concerts of the year. A few months ago I wrote from France about Les Arts Florissants' splendid production of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's opera *Medée*. Restricted by the exigencies of touring, here they opted for two shorter works, the one-act "opéra-divertissement" *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* and the two-act chamber opera *Le Descent d'Orphée aux enfers*. Both have small casts and minimal instrumentation, both were beautifully acted (under Christoph Galland's stage direction) and sung without costume or props or scores; and both confirmed that Charpentier is one of the great composers of the Baroque period.

That is a belief of which William Christie, the director of the group, has been long convinced (why else would he name his ensemble after a work by Charpentier?), and one he invariably seems to communicate to his excellent players and carefully chosen, fine young singers. They in their turn relish the intense expressivity of Charpentier's vocal lines, which sit teasingly between recitative and aria and point the way forward to Rameau. Delicious suspensions, stepwise movement naturally fitting the cadence of phrases, shapely rhythms and, above all, beautifully gauged harmonies fit the words they serve like a glove. That is as true of the quickfire comedy of *Les Plaisirs de Versailles* as of the more serious (and possibly unfinished) *Orphée*. In the former piece, the haughty *Musique* (radiantly sung by the soprano Sophie Daneman) is time and again interrupted

Les Arts Florissants  
Wigmore Hall

by Conversation (the penetratingly characterful contralto of Katalin Karolyi) in a contest of comparative pleasures. Both are hilariously hured by Comus (Jean-François Gardelle) to come to good terms with each other.

In this piece Charpentier shows himself a master of lightness and mock-seriousness, and the singers and players responded with sharp, crisp reactions that would put most English Baroque groups to shame.

On the other hand, in *Orphée* he intoxicates his audience with music for his hero of extraordinary intensity and poignancy, adding to its sense of specialness by accompanying him with the richly emotive sonorities of two solo viols. Here the part was exquisitely sung and, quite properly, thoroughly indulgently paced by Paul Agnew.

As Monteverdi does in his *Orfeo*, Charpentier ups the heart-wrenching stakes by thrice repeating, and increasing the potency of, Orphée's entreaty to Pluto (the severely implacable Fernand Bernad). The three tormented souls, Ixion, Tantalus and Tyne, close the piece, apart from a tantalisingly extended instrumental postlude and another touching repetition from the chorus, by singing that the happiness of hell will make heaven jealous. Music such as this, and given with such commitment, turns all our personal little hells into heavens.

The concert and the rest of the tour have been sponsored by Pechiney.

STEPHEN PETTITT



Sir Colin Davis: showing his players to best advantage

## Delights along the way

After the impressive credentials presented the night before, the Dresden Staatskapelle of Saxony added an extra degree of conviction in the second of their two Proms under their conductor laureate Sir Colin Davis. Mind you, an orchestra of this calibre could hardly do otherwise in a programme of core classics by Beethoven and Brahms, and yet they were able to make much of what they played sound newly minted for the occasion.

Partly this was the result of Sir Colin knowing the virtues of his players from careful rehearsal, and then playing on them, as it were, to show them to best advantage. Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* is not a work often associated with him (I have never heard him conduct it before), and it was a pleasure to share the spirit as well as the detail of the music's countryside excursion.

Dresden  
Staatskapelle/Davis  
Albert Hall/Radio 3

The conductor set off briskly enough, but never at the heedless canter that Karajan, for instance, used to favour, and with ample regard for incidental moments as well as the symphonic structure. The undulating figures in "Scene by the Brook" were rendered not just as accompaniment, but with appreciation of their place in the scenic perspective, and if the "Thunderstorm" was a touch restrained and the "Shepherd's Song" stilted to start with, it soon mellowed into heartfelt thanksgiving and a magical ending as of a contented return home. For Brahms in his First Symphony in C minor the orchestral players excelled

themselves in beauty of tone and poetry of line. Encouraged by the conductor to a rich vibrato, the strings became not merely warm, but almost incandescent, while the compact central grouping of brass and woodwind noted the night before here paid dividends in such passages as the pastoral interlude of the third-movement intermezzo. Sir Colin gave considered weight to each phase of symphonic development in the opening movement, a secure and sensible unfolding of the music's purpose with a clear sense of direction. The stealthy, sombre introduction to the finale brought forth a radiant horn-call like a shaft of sunlight penetrating the gloom before the broad, swinging theme in C major was carried forward to a jubilant peroration.

NOEL GOODWIN

THEATRE: Jeremy Kingston is disappointed by a study of the relationship between captive and captor

THOUGH Pinter's early play *The Lover* contains only two significant characters, he keeps our prurient suspicions active by including a third in the cast list. He even gives the fellow a name — but when this mysterious John makes his appearance, he turns out to be the milkman and speaks no more than half a dozen sentences, all to do with whether the lady of the house wants to buy any cream.

At least we catch sight of him, and I certainly hoped to see the eponymous goat in Michele Celeste's new play after noticing among the programme credits that *Freightliners Farm* is thanked for the use of Emma. We hear the creature often enough, bleating away in her offstage pen, and Shazah, her Lebanese owner, frequently strides off to fondle the beast or throw a rotten apple her way. Celeste's second character, a Spanish archaeologist, is denied a hands-on relationship with the animal because for most of the time he is chained to the ceiling.

## Hostage to misfortune

Towards the end I became quite frantic to catch a glimpse of Emma, or Kidney, as Shazah calls her, to relieve the tedium of Celeste's unrewarding, undramatic story of a hostage and his guard. But by this time I would have welcomed the entrance of anyone, Druze, Maronite, Palestinian, Terry Waite, even the late Menachem Begin.

The play's solitary item of any quality is the notion that hostages in Beirut were, apparently, treated as currency among the local women, exchanged as their market value rose and fell, in the hope that eventually one could be traded for the relative that some other group was holding. Shazah desperately seeks her husband and takes the whole of two acts to find him, by which time she has chopped off a couple of Carlos's

My Goat  
Cockpit

fingers — treated as a comic incident — and cleaned him up when he fouls his breeches, which he does in front of us. She also gives birth, though we are spared the sight of that. All this takes place on the broken marble floor of what has once been a rich man's house (design by Tom Piper). I couldn't believe in Shazah, jerkily spoken by Anna Savva. Nor was Jonathan Arun's Carlos any more credible, uttering all the clichés of a prisoner, but given none of the insights which might have made watching his plight worthwhile. The play's failure (directed by Burt Caesar) is all the more disappointing because Celeste once wrote *Hanging the President*, another study of prisoners, but perceptive where this is banal, and thrilling where this is torpid.



Anna Savva and Jonathan Arun: lacking the necessary credibility

Pansori  
Purcell Room

singers claim they cannot reach the elevated stage which leads to a great performance. As far as I could tell, Ahn Suk-Son had no shortcomings. Her vocal ability was astonishing and, judging by the audible enthusiasm of a solid Korean contingent, I was right. As for the story, this was a convoluted tale of provincial magistrates, an entertainer's daughter, an awkward mother and some civil service exams: the stuff of most operas, in fact.

I could have followed the action by reading my programme, but Ahn was too charismatic for that. She changed timbres from moment to moment, swooping through microtonal inflections, squeezing out words with fierce intensity, widening a controlled vibrato into a sob. Moments of great sorrow caused me some bafflement, however. Knockabout dialogue was an integral part of the rapport between singer and drummer. The jokes were as funny to me as a Ben Elton concert. But when Ahn's most heart-rending vocals were greeted by laughter, I could only surmise that Koreans treat tragedy with a dose of humour. These are the perils of cross-cultural incomprehension, but the brilliance of the music overcame such snags.

DAVID TOOP







the soul stalwart's guide to becoming a lightweight heavyweight ... just guess who's got them old cosmic blues again

# Luther breaks free of his diet of worms

Much scurrying precedes his entrance. First a succession of catering trolleys arrives — one laden with soft drinks and the wherewithal for tea, another with the most handsome basket of fruit, a third with some tiny perfect sandwiches and little nibbly things. Then a senior member of his entourage breezes in to predict that the suite is too chilly for a man in preparation for a one-off, all-eyes-on-his-concert appearance and to switch off the air-conditioning. Next he calls the front desk to order that the heating be turned higher. But higher is still not enough and so a heater is ordered. It arrives as, finally, does the great man himself.

"It's a little hot in here. I won't need the heater," he says and whoosh! the heater is gone. Such cossetting may sound excessive, but then the vocal cords of Luther Vandross are among the most precious in the world. He has been called the very last of soul's great male romantics, although that is a title he himself disputes. "What about Jodeci?" he asks. "What about Boyz II Men? Vocal groups, I quibble, not solo stars. He looks unconvinced."

Beyond dispute, though, is that this one-time television jingle-maker has reaped seriously large rewards from his art. We may be perspiring in a suite at the Dorchester but yes, that's a diamond big as the Ritz on his finger. Those are also diamonds on his bracelet, and around the face of his watch. Serious stuff for a man dressed in jeans and a sports shirt, perhaps. Vandross has been living the glamorous life for long enough to wear them well — he admits cheerfully to having earned "truckloads" of money 20 years ago, as one of the most sought-after session vocalists in America.

And if, now, scarcely anyone would dare ask him to contribute to

Everyone knew Luther Vandross could sing, but he remained a medium-sized fish in the soul pond. And then the boss's wife got hooked. Alan Jackson hears the yarn

somebody or other's background harmonies, or croon the kiss-off line to the latest advertising campaign, he remains fully respectful of the skills such work taught him. "Anyone can be Amelia Earhart," he likes to say, "but it takes a special kind of pilot to fly in formation."

Over the past 14 years, however, the 43-year-old's solo blend of glossy funk and achingly soulful balladeering has won him a reputation as one of popular music's most upmarket acts. But Vandross has more to offer than just a glorious voice. Like the soul divas who inspired him as a teenager — Dionne Warwick and Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and Patti LaBelle — he knows about timing and phrasing, about presentation and the importance of looking like a star.

"I have a healthy respect for other male vocalists — Eddie Kendricks of The Temptations, for instance, was the best tenor in the world," he says. "But subconsciously my preference has always been for the texture of music made by women."

Over time, his parallel abilities as a songwriter and producer have encouraged his glamorous idols to come sweeping into the studio to record with him, each anxious that he should re-create for them a little piece of the Vandross magic. But today, having long since become firm friends with all his boyhood influences, he is of a mood to

concentrate on doing the best he can for his own career. Since 1981 he has released nine critically praised LPs, each of which has sold between one and three million copies. Not bad by most people's standards, but to him it feels like under-achievement. "I want the sales that Billy Joel and Michael Bolton get," he says.

For years he has been pressing the point home with his record company, Sony. "If everybody thinks I'm so great, and if I can sell out ten nights at Wembley Arena, why don't I get higher on the charts?" For instance, "Never Too Much" should have been a bigger hit. And "Here And Now," he says of his single releases, "And Give Me The Reason" should definitely have been No. 1, but instead it

"I want the sales that Billy Joel and Michael Bolton get"

peaked at 57 in America. Fifty-seven! Any loser can enter the charts higher than 57."

All that is about to change, though — thanks, it seems, to the timely intervention of one of his own younger admirers. Mariah Carey just loves Luther. She plays his music at home, in the car, everywhere, and she sings along. More crucially, she kept insisting about Vandross to the man she recently married. Her husband is Tommy Mottola, president of Sony in America. The result would seem to have been a new corporate focus on the Vandross career.

"Tommy came to me one day and

said, 'My wife's always telling me how wonderful you are,' and I replied: 'Well, don't argue with her — she knows what she's talking about.' Then he came to me and said, 'Have I got an idea for you? Tell me what you think.'"

The idea was to expand on Vandross's habit of recording one carefully chosen cover version per project — "Superstar," say, or "A House Is Not A Home" — and produce an entire album of already familiar material.

Songs is full of the sort of titles that the singer's potential new audience already love — "Killing Me Softly", "Evergreen" and "Always And Forever", for example, or the dance track "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now."

The single from the album is a duet with Carey herself on the Lionel Richie/Diana Ross hit "Endless Love". Its performers will team up live on Tuesday when the world's media is flown in to witness a Vandross one-off at the Albert Hall. The performance, which will also involve the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, will be filmed for future television transmission and video release.

Only one thing is worrying the man who goes up and down the weight scales with a velocity to rival Oprah Winfrey's. "I'm far from my heaviest of 330lb — now that's humungous, even on someone who's 6ft 3in. But still I'd like to lose another 30lb before I get out there with Mariah."

He looks wistful at this, then suddenly brightens. "What the heck, though, I remind myself that this [he taps his waistline] isn't why tickets for that show sold out in four hours flat. This is [he taps his throat]. So saying, he smiles a diamond-bright smile and heads for the trays of refreshments, there to select ... a Diet 7-Up.

"Endless Love" is released by Sony. The album songs will be released on September 19



The slimline Luther Vandross — still keen to lose another stone or two — waits for superstardom to call

ERIC CLAPTON  
From *The Cradle*  
(Duck/Reprise 9362 45735)

ERIC Clapton must feel like a pig in a trough. After all those years of struggling to conform to a safe, mainstream, middle-aged rock formula which his record company could market with confidence to the Tina Turner/Phil Collins crowd, he suddenly discovers that what his audience really wants is a little less varnish and a lot more blues. *Unplugged*, his 1992 album, which offered five recordings of standards such as "Rollin' and Tumblin'", "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out" and "Walkin' Blues" alongside acoustic versions of "Layla" and "Tears In Heaven", has now sold an enviable 14 million copies, making it easily the most successful album of his career.

So, what a surprise! For his latest offering, *From The Cradle*, it's goodbye to all that lukewarm, journeyman rock, and a big welcome back to the Clapton who used to be the most blueswailing rock guitarist of his or any other generation. Recorded "completely live with hardly any overdubs", these 16 tracks recall Clapton in his pre-Cream, blues-purist phase, an era when it only took a weekend in the studio to yield the classic *Bluesbreakers* — by John Mayall's band, "featuring Eric Clapton" — in 1966.

Apart from a needless re-read of Muddy Waters's over-familiar mating call, "Hoochie

## And now the god news: Eric's got the blues

NEW ALBUMS: What did Clapton sound like before he was a megastar, daddy? Just cop an earful of this, son

Cochise "Man", the album steers a successful course between the obvious and the obscure. Most shades of blues are represented, from down-and-dirty slide guitar work-outs, such as Leroy Carr's "Blues Before Sunrise", which Clapton sings in an unconvincing "Satchmo" growl, to the acoustic treatment of "How Long" (also written by Carr), complete with harmonica and washboard.

But it is on a succession of big, slow, set-piece numbers that Clapton excels: a high-octane reading of Eddie Boyd's "Five Long Years" (a song he first recorded with the Yardbirds in 1964), an intensely pained reworking of Freddy King's "Someday After A While" and an utterly spell-binding version of Willie Dixon's "Croonin' The Blues", in which he exhibits the devastating range and fluency which, even today, places his guitar playing in a class of its own.

It is little short of a miracle that Clapton still has such an abundant appetite for playing this stuff, but his legions of



Eric Clapton goes back to his roots, where he belongs

admirers — not to mention the music publishers and estates of a lot of deceased blues singers — are going to be delighted that he does.

**SUGAR**  
*File Under Easy Listening*  
(Creation CRECD 172)  
FOR a band about to clock up their third Top Ten album, Sugar show surprisingly little sign of crossing over into the mainstream. True, singer, guitarist and songwriter Bob

Mould is not one of the high-rolling, high-cheekboned type of rock stars, but even so the songs on *File Under Easy Listening* are amply blessed with melodic pop appeal.

What keeps Sugar closer to the cutting edge than the average chart-bound band is Mould's tendency to dish out his songs in harsh, peremptory bursts of sound, often dressing up elegantly constructed melodies in arrangements that seem to have been fashioned for the sole purpose of battering down concrete walls.

"Your Favorite Thing" is one of several fine tunes on this album whose subtler points tend to get lost in this way. The band sound better when they ease off on the power-drill stuff, as on "Believe What You're Saying" and "Explode And Make Up", a couple of tracks in a post-R.E.M. indie-rock vein tucked away at the end of the album. It's probably a heresy to say it, but I bet these guys could make a lethal *Unplugged* album.

GRANT LEE BUFFALO  
*Mighty Joe Moon*  
(Slash/London 828 541)

RELEASED last year, Grant Lee Buffalo's first album, *Fuzzy*, was a minor masterpiece. But although the follow-up mines a similar seam, the trio from Los Angeles has not quite recaptured the peculiar magic of that debut.

Once again predominantly slow, acoustic, dusty old laments are rudely interrupted by glowering squalls of heavily overdriven guitar noise which come barging into the listener's living space with all the violence of an electrical storm. But the device is less judiciously applied than before and, as songs such as "Demon Called Deception" and "Lady Godiva And Me" veer from a mood of gentle melancholia to a thunderous roar and back again, their appeal is undermined by the constant tussle for their soul.

The album only hits its stride towards the end, when "Last Days Of Tecumseh", a grainy interlude for banjo and voice, prefaces a brace of acoustic songs: "Happiness" and "Honey Don't Think". Here, at last, singer Grant Lee Phillips's burnished Southern drawl finds the melodies and breathing space previously lacking. The big, emotional finale "Rock Of Ages" is another highlight which goes some way towards mitigating the effects of an otherwise disappointing collection.

DAVID SINCLAIR

# HMV

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## BACH to BASICS

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TOP TEN ALBUMS		
1	Definitely Maybe	Oasis (Creation)
2	The 3 Tenors In Concert 1994	Domingo etc (Teldec)
3	End of Part One (Greatest Hits)	Wet Wet Wet (Precious)
4	Twelve Deadly Cyns	Cyndi Lauper (Epic)
5	Parade	Blur (Food)
6	The Essential Collection	Elvis Presley (RCA)
7	File Under Easy Listening	Sugar (Creation)
8	Always & Forever	Eternal (EMI)
9	Mamouna	Bryan Ferry (Virgin)
10	Come	Prince (Warner Bros)

Compiled by NME

### NEW WAVES

## Poetry in motion

Look around the fringes of London club culture and you will find a steady upsurge of poetry and jazz. One Hell of a Storm, subtitled *Verse-mongers Meet Sound-creators*, is a compilation of more than 13 poets and a host of musicians. Mapping a sector of the local poetry and jazz territory, the album is on the Tongue & Groove label.

To find the roots of the UK poetry and music scene, nobody needs to look to the American beat poetry and jazz of Jack Kerouac. More important in London are the recordings made by Langston Hughes with jazz players such as Charles Mingus, or the rap poetry of the Last Poets, Watts Prophets and the recently rejuvenated Gil-Scott Heron. Hip-hop is also an influence and many of the significant American artists working in this crossover field can be heard on another new compilation (to be released on October 24), entitled *Stolen Moments*.

The dub poetry which emerged from Jamaica and England in the late 1970s — from Linton Kwesi Johnson, the late Mikey Smith and Benjamin Zephaniah among others — is also an inspirational touchstone for London's younger writers. Current styles represent a new era, however, ranging from jazz to trip-hop to poetry read over musical atmospheres and the forbidding mood of MC Mel'to. Philip Larkin would not have approved.

DAVID TOOP

# oasis

## Definitely Maybe

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# Sex, sin... and sexism in a steamy kitchen

The great delight of the picture-search button is, of course, the facility to watch programmes in reverse, and thus improve them. Watch a Fred Dinnah film backwards and you can see a factory chimney start off as rattling debris on the ground, with strange swirls of dust, and then, abruptly, the edifice sucks all the bricks together, rears up vertical and lurches into a solid upright. Similarly, *Blue Peter* viewers have, for many years, enjoyed watching home-made Mr. Day's presents miraculously disassemble under the nimble fingers of Simon Groom (or whoever) into — shazam! — an array of practical household items any mum or auntie would be glad to receive (I always fancied those cotton reels).

Watching the second part of ITV's four-hour drama, *Fast*, last night left a rather similar impression on the mind. It was quite

peculiar. Whereas in Wednesday's first two hours of this complex lie-damn-lies thriller the plot had painted every character into a corner where they could only scream for help (and had only themselves to blame), the second half cleverly reversed the process, unpainted the floor and allowed them to go free. Newsround Nick (John Hannah) resourcefully undid the "MP Sex Scandal" story he had initiated, wrestling the genie back into the bottle; meanwhile, politician P.J. Moreton (Michael Gambon) redeemed his soul by telling the truth in court (imagined), spiky-by-name daughter Holly (Susannah Harker) finally found a smugger of forgiveness for Nick and her father, if not herself; and oh well, what the heck, the kid got the dog back, too.

In a tale that promised to be as cynical as *Newsround* crossed with *House of Cards*, such a compassionate reversal was a real

surprise, a sensational turn of events, and it made a pleasant change. The logic of the first half suggested at the very least that Joel (Gambon's Clark Kent look-alike American boy lover) would be rescued. All betrayals were expiated, all responsibilities clasped, no harm done in the end. It was as though Macheth, reflecting "I am in blood stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er" suddenly thought "Hey ho but look on the bright side" shook the gore off his swamp boots, and sent a box of mixed fruit to the Macduffs.

Having watched autumn season trailers since the middle of July, most viewers will have been virtually word-perfect for last night's *Chef* (BBC1). "What does a fish look like?" we



Lynne Truss

chanted, nationwide, seeing Lenny Henry in a river seep in so far that, should he wade no more, he would still fall over with a comical splash very shortly.

Back in the steamy kitchen, he called for a very sharp knife, honed like a razor, and we all knew why. "I have to castrate the person who made this sauce and I want to avoid any unnecessary

suffering." Yeah, yeah, seen it. Perhaps it is too difficult to edit trails for comedy series without making them look universally lame-brained or giving their jokes away, but it does seem a bit tough on the writers who struggle for surprises (such as the burning dustbin in *Common as Muck*) to see them blown repeatedly in advance. That knitted-balaclava gag in *Birds of a Feather* wasn't even very good in the first place. And lovers of *2point4children* will be on tenterhooks awaiting the Wonderbra joke (Bill with two flat lumps of pastry dough, squeezing them together into astonishing twin peaks). Knowing it's coming somehow makes it very hard to relax.

Back at *Chef*, however, the new storyline concerns the very talented actor Ian McNeice. *Sous-chef* Gustave Laroche is a south Londoner ("Call me Gary"), whose brooches are apparently so heaven-

ly they make people do irrational things — such as overlook his sexism and alcohol problem. Normally, McNeice plays nice mild detectives and/or Catholic priests (he is an ideal Father Brown), so to hear him slur lecherously after Alice, from a position slumped on the line, "Her legs go all the way up, I reckon I could force myself," was a credit to considerable imagination in the casting department. Meanwhile, Lenny Henry continues to spit out his put-downs like microwaved custard, and his minions quake like Muppets.

Tuning in to Jonathon Porritt's *Sex, Sin and Survival* (Channel 4), we learnt some pretty good news. While the population of the planet is still heading for the jam-packed shoulder-to-shoulder situation famously envisaged by Tony Hancock (with the survivor being "the tallest bloke with the biggest

hooter"), great strides have apparently been made in peasant societies to curb the growth rate — in Colombia, for example, and also in Egypt, where 600 hours of television have been devoted to birth control information. In both countries, family sizes have dropped considerably, and Porritt looked jolly pleased, except (of course) with the Pope. But then he explained that the real pressure on world resources comes not from the poor people of the South anyway, but the over-consumers in the North. Us. So don't get too excited.

One thinks with compassion of the Egyptians treated to 600 hours of contraceptive television. How inventive they must be, if they want to avoid being counterproductive, driving viewers off to each other's charms. "What's on the telly, dearest?" "Drama. About killer sperm shoot-outs." "Not Die Hard? Not again?"

## BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (73248)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (31511257)
- 9.05am The Flintstones (1458199) 9.30am Star Memories. The late Paul McCartney (189199)
- 10.00am News (Ceefax) and weather (8344151) 10.05am Playdays (1) (6453458) 10.30am The Family Man (1) (7275422) 10.35am Model World (1) (5391769)
- 11.00am News (Ceefax) and weather (8344151) 11.05am Moonlighting (1) (6133777) 11.55am For the Love of It All. A romance dancer's story (847422)
- 12.00am News (Ceefax) regional news and weather (1597644) 12.05pm Big Day Out. From Belsenau Festival; north Wales (6137025) 12.55pm Regional news and weather (1656140)
- 1.00pm One O'Clock News (Ceefax) (87183)
- 1.30pm Neighbours (Ceefax) (8314944)
- 1.50pm Turnabout. Vocabulary quiz (8) (8878498)
- 2.20pm FILM: Murder at the Gallop (1983, b/w). Margaret Rutherford stars in an Agatha Christie whodunit. Directed by George Pollock (8638731)
- 3.45pm Favourite Songs (1) (7163199) 4.10pm Rugsby (1) (8276915) 4.35pm The Real World Show. Reel and others (1). (Ceefax) (8) (5220070) 5.00pm Newsround (168240)
- 5.10pm White Fang. Drama series, based on the novel by Jack London. (Ceefax) (8159977)
- 5.30pm Neighbours (Ceefax) (8) (119064) Northern Ireland Inside Ulster.
- 6.00pm Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (793) Northern Ireland Inside Ulster.
- 6.30pm Regional news magazines (370)
- 7.00pm Wipeout. Game show hosted by Paul Daniels (Ceefax) (8) (7731)
- 7.30pm The Men in France. Tom Vernon cycles from Normandy to the River Loire via the village of Camembert. (Ceefax) (8) (557)
- 8.00pm Keeping Up Appearances. Patricia Routledge stars as the social-climbing Hyacinth Bucket (1). (Ceefax) (8) (3151)



Davidson and Virgo on the set of 8.30pm.

- 8.30pm NEW Big Bang. Jim Davidson hosts the popular and general knowledge show, with referee John Virgo. (Ceefax) (8) (2286)
- 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News with Peter Sissons (Ceefax). Regional news and weather (8064)
- 9.30pm FILM: The Other Side of Murder (1991) starring Richard Chamberlain and Michael Learned. Drama based on the real-life story of the Colburn family whose comfortable life disintegrates in the traumatic aftermath of a vicious robbery. Directed by John Carpenter. (88052) Northern Ireland. Out of the Archives. (88052) FILM: The Other Side of Murder. 11.25-12.50am Bangkok Hilton
- 11.00pm FILM: The Fog (1980) starring Adrienne Barbeau, Hal Holbrook and Jamie Lee Curtis. Supernatural thriller about Victorian mariners lured to their deaths on the rocks of Antonio Bay who return to seek vengeance. Directed by John Carpenter. (Ceefax) (8) (88286)
- 12.30am The Neville Brothers Live in New Orleans (1) (88955) 1.30-1.35 Weather (5434652)

## VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**  
As London except 1.55pm-2.00pm The Young Doctors (8314666) 2.55-3.30pm Central News (871441) 3.30-3.50pm Anglia News (871441) 3.50-4.00pm Anglia News (871441) 4.00-4.10pm Anglia News (871441) 4.10-4.20pm Anglia News (871441) 4.20-4.30pm Anglia News (871441) 4.30-4.40pm Anglia News (871441) 4.40-4.50pm Anglia News (871441) 4.50-5.00pm Anglia News (871441) 5.00-5.10pm Anglia News (871441) 5.10-5.20pm Anglia News (871441) 5.20-5.30pm Anglia News (871441) 5.30-5.40pm Anglia News (871441) 5.40-5.50pm Anglia News (871441) 5.50-6.00pm Anglia News (871441) 6.00-6.10pm Anglia News (871441) 6.10-6.20pm Anglia News (871441) 6.20-6.30pm Anglia News (871441) 6.30-6.40pm Anglia News (871441) 6.40-6.50pm Anglia News (871441) 6.50-7.00pm Anglia News (871441) 7.00-7.10pm Anglia News (871441) 7.10-7.20pm Anglia News (871441) 7.20-7.30pm Anglia News (871441) 7.30-7.40pm Anglia News (871441) 7.40-7.50pm Anglia News (871441) 7.50-8.00pm Anglia News (871441) 8.00-8.10pm Anglia News (871441) 8.10-8.20pm 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